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THE VIA VITÆ OF ST. BENEDICT

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THE VIA VITÆ OF ST. BENEDICT

THE HOLY RULE ARRANGED
FOR MENTAL PRAYER

By DOM BERNARD HAYES
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With an Introduction by the Right Rev.
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"Christus Dominus sic allocutus est: 'Ille est monachus Benedicti, qui plus obedit Regulæ quam carni.'"—S. BIRGITTA: *Revel.* l. 4, c. 127.

"The man of God (Benedict), besides so many miracles which made him famous amongst men; was also held in high repute as a teacher; for he wrote a Rule for Monks, both excellent in its discretion and eloquent in style. If anyone desires to know more of his manner of life, he can find all that the Master did in this Rule; for the holy man could not in any way teach otherwise than he lived."—*Second Book of Dialogues of St. Gregory the Great*, c. xxxvi.

"In omnibus igitur omnes magistram sequantur regulam, nequis ab ea temere declinetur a quoquam."—*S. Reg.*, cap. iii.

"Ecce pietate sua demonstrat nobis Dominus viam vitæ."—*Prologus in Regulam.*

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INTRODUCTION

THE idea of this book is a good one and it will be welcomed by many members of the Benedictine family and others. A series of devout Meditations on the Rule of St. Benedict is virtually a novelty at the present day; for although in past times pious affections and exercises on the Holy Rule have been given to the world by one or other of its numerous commentators they are not easily accessible in a form adapted for use. Moreover the present publication aims at providing the reader with materials for pursuing that "brief and pure" method of prayer which is recommended in St. Benedict himself.*

The holy Patriarch gives no explicit instruction how to pray. To him as to those Fathers of the Eastern Church and of the desert whose traditions he carried on, "prayer" is simply the uprising of the heart with God. Vocal prayer or psalmody was to fill up a large portion of each day, and mental prayer was to continue as far as possible during all the waking hours not occupied by the Divine Office.

* Reg. S. Benedict. c. 20.

In St. Benedict's time there was no fixed time for "meditation"—no hour or half-hour in which the whole community knelt in their places in Church and devoted themselves to the exercise of mental prayer. A monk, as far as possible, should pray always. St. Benedict was intimately acquainted with the writings of Cassian, whose disciple he calls himself. We may be sure that he strongly held, with the ancients whom Cassian quotes in his first Conference, that the monk's grand aim was *θεωρία*, or "contemplation"—the inherence of the soul on Divine things and on God. With Cassian, he was far from thinking that the attainment of contemplation—that is to say, of anything like continuous and intense application of the spirit to God—was an easy matter. All the means and instruments for the gradual acquisition of such a spiritual condition, which are entered into at great length by Cassian in the Conference I have quoted, and in the ninth Conference, were, without doubt, insisted on and explained at Monte Cassino. But we find no trace of "methods," if by methods we mean a business-like marshalling of the mental powers and faculties to produce a special effect in a given time. It would be absurd to suppose that St. Benedict and his school of spirituality did not give a novice useful directions as to how to use the imagination, the reason, and the will. This kind of instruction is of the essence of all "methods"; and the "methods" which have been devised and delivered to the world by great Saints and masters in all ages have invariably dealt with these essential factors in "contemplation."

Of the practical utility of "methods" there can be no doubt whatever; but it is always useful to go back to the teachings of the desert—that a man has no other purpose in this life except to fix his spirit upon his God. It is not in itself a sin if he fails to make any considerable success in this great undertaking, but the better he succeeds the more perfect he is. Meanwhile he may, and must, make use of means, instruments, and "methods," but must never mistake the means or the method for the end itself.

Almost the only direction which St. Benedict gives in regard to mental prayer—*oratio*, as he calls it, in distinction to *psalmodia*—is that it should be "short and pure"—*brevis et pura*. Here, again, he follows Cassian. What is meant by "pure" prayer is explained in the third chapter of the ninth Conference. "Pure" prayer in that chapter is the prayer of a soul that is neither under the dominion of passions and lusts, nor habitually distracted with earthly solicitudes. No one can hope to attain to genuine and constant prayer unless he has subdued his nature, his self-love, and his pride. For "pure" prayer is prayer made with all the force of the purified heart. When St. Benedict goes on to say that prayer should be short, he is again referring to the teachings of the Conferences. The ancient Fathers recommended short forms and short spells. They found a pattern for all Christian prayer in the *Our Father*. It was in the ardent and fervent utterance of its petitions, and in the use of the innumerable pregnant elevations of Holy Scripture, that they found the shortest and most effective way

to intimate communion with God. Prayer, moreover, was not to be kept too long at its highest point of intensity. For beginners, and proportionately for all, it was advisable not to strain Nature too severely. We read, indeed, that not a few of the monks of the desert, in their ardour, and, we may say, with that indiscretion which was sometimes found among them, would prolong the effort of prayer till exhausted nature broke down, and fervour gave way to discouragement and disgust. St. Benedict recognized that no general rule could be given for the length of each individual monk's strenuous prayer; the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was to be the guide. But we cannot be wrong in supposing that he would not have considered two half-hours daily, or, indeed, two hours, to be more than discretion would allow.

There is a phrase in the twentieth chapter of the Rule which has sometimes been misunderstood. The holy legislator goes on to say that "in the assembly"—that is, when the community are making prayer in common—"prayer should never be prolonged"—*omnino brevietur*. This direction does not refer, as has already been implied, to what we now know as the "meditation" made by the whole of the monks together. We are told that the monks of the earliest times were accustomed at the end of each psalm of the Office to fall prostrate for a period of silent prayer. This custom survives in the collect, or *oratio*, which is said by the priest at the end of each canonical hour. Perhaps also, at the termination of each Office, this secret prayer was usually

more distinctly prolonged. It is easy to see how an indiscreet fervour might lead the presiding Superior to lengthen out this feature of the common Office, and it is against this that St. Benedict here lays down a rule.

No book that is offered as an aid to mental prayer can be expected to be useful to all persons and at all times. But there will be many, especially among those who wear the habit of St. Benedict, who will be assisted at some period of their spiritual experience by the reflections and pious acts of which this book is made up. It seems to suggest most efficiently the true relation of meditation or consideration to what the Ven. Father Baker calls "affectuous actuation"—a relation which is insisted upon in all the text-books, but which is much more readily taken in when, as in these pages, it is shown by example.

✠ J. C. H.

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THE

VIA VITÆ OF ST. BENEDICT

THE HOLY RULE ARRANGED FOR MENTAL PRAYER

THERE can be no doubt that to many people the morning meditation is the most difficult spiritual exercise of the day. The exercise of mental prayer does not require special gifts of mind or learning. All that is needed is an honest wish and a real endeavour to pray to God. Why, then, is this morning exercise so difficult to many souls? There may be many reasons. Chief amongst these is a want of proper instruction. The word "meditation," which we generally use, is misleading. It suggests, to some extent, a mental exercise which is beyond the ordinary mind at any time, and beyond most minds at an early hour of the morning. It leads one to think that the subject-matter has to be dwelt upon, drawn out in fullest detail and in logical order, and that when one is able to do this one can "meditate." The exercise is not "meditation," but "*mental prayer.*" We make use of meditation to rouse ourselves to

pray, and for this only. It is a means to an end, and we must use the means only in so far as is necessary. The end or object is *to pray*. Long and formal meditations were not known amongst the early monks. Their prayer was affective or contemplative. St. Alphonsus says: "For you religious all your mental prayer should consist of acts and petitions."

When, therefore, a person thinks "I cannot make a meditation," let him analyze what his thought means. It means that he cannot work through a subject *mentally*. This needs a trained mind. It may be a useful exercise in the preparation of a sermon. But we come before God *to pray*, and *anyone* who is serious and mortified can pray. To pray *well*, of course, is difficult, because one's general life has to be of a high standard before this can be done. But to pray in a way pleasing to God should not be hard.

It is a common complaint that it is hard to find a book which appeals to the heart and raises it to prayer. There is, however, one book which must appeal to and influence every Benedictine—viz., the Holy Rule. In this Rule we have all that we need. Its words come from the lips of our Holy Father. It is our duty to assimilate his teaching, and we must form our spiritual character upon the Rule. It should be our handbook through life. In it we shall find subject-matter for prayer sufficient for our lifetime; and the more frequently and deeply we think and pray upon the text of the Holy Rule, the more Benedictine in spirit we shall become.

If we take the text of the Holy Rule as the subject-matter of our mental prayer, we shall find in it not

only thoughts of the utmost importance to us, but also a store of holy aspirations and ejaculations which may be "darted forth" to God. Haeften (Tract VIII., Disq. vii.) says:

"I cannot pass by without mention that pious and fruitful reading of the Rule which consists in turning the Rule into prayer, so that by this means it may be impressed more firmly on the mind, and at the same time being prayer, obtain the grace of strength to fulfil it. St. Francis Borgia, we read, used to turn St. Thomas' Theology into litanies, so that his study was prayer, and his disputations about God were held with God. This example of pious industry may be applied to the Rule. Alcuin, in his book 'De Psalmorum usu,' under the heading 'Oratio Monachorum,' weaves the very words of St. Benedict into a prayer, and bequeaths it for the recitation of the monks."

Three short and simple acts should be said as a preparation for our mental prayer—viz., an act of *Faith—i.e.*, of the Presence of God; an act of *Contrition—i.e.*, of humility and sorrow for sin; and an act of *Petition*, that we may pray well. Two or three minutes should suffice for these preparatory acts. After this we should get the thought of the passage of the Rule quite clearly before us, and then *pray* upon it. As Haeften suggests, we may turn the very words of the Rule into aspirations and ejaculations. We must take great care, however, not to allow the exercise to become mere vocal prayer. The ejaculations must be *dwelt upon, said slowly, repeated, made our own.* We should never be anxious to get

through the matter set for one meditation, nor leave one thought or aspiration for another, until we have extracted all that is helpful to us in it. "Let us remember that not for much speaking, but for our purity of heart and tears of compunction shall we be heard. Our prayer, therefore, ought to be *short* and *pure*, except it be prolonged by the inspiration of Divine Grace" (Rule, c. xx.). Though it is wise to minimize mere "meditation" as much as possible, we must take care that our prayer is "meditative," *i.e.*, full of thought, meaning, realization. We must not do away with thought because we are praying. Prayer is the raising not only of the heart but of the mind also to God. The Psalmist says: "In meditatione mea exardescet ignis"; so we must turn our thoughts into prayer, and put thought into our prayers.

When the time is drawing to a close, we can make some resolution which will suggest itself from what has gone before. The custom of making a different resolution every day is apt to teach one rather how to forget resolutions than how to keep them. We should not change the resolution often, but let one be kept to for some time until some fault has been checked or some virtue obtained.

As a conclusion, make an act of thanksgiving and of petition for help to keep your resolution.

The text of the Holy Rule, used in this way, should not only become fixed in the memory, but should be a great motive-power in the will.

In conclusion, we should be zealous to improve the *quality* of our prayer rather than to increase the

quantity. This can only be done by a greater spirit of mortification and of abstraction of life.

PROLOGUE.

I.

Text.

Ausculta, o fili, præcepta Magistri, et inclina aurem cordis tui, et admonitionem pii Patris libenter excipe, et efficaciter comple; ut ad eum, per obedientiæ laborem redeas, a quo per inobedientiæ desidiam recesseras.

Hearken, O my son, to the precepts of thy Master, and incline the ear of thine heart; receive with joy and faithfully fulfil the admonition of the loving Father, that thou mayest return by the labour of obedience to Him from Whom thou hast departed through the sloth of disobedience.

Thoughts.

I. God speaks to you through St. Benedict: "*Ausculta*"—"*Hearken.*"

Consider the attitude of soul necessary when God speaks:

(*a*) *Attention*, and the *humility* of a child—*Ausculta*, o *fili*.

(*b*) *Docility*; et admonitionem *libenter* excipe—*i.e.*, *with joy*.

(*c*) *Resolution*; *efficaciter* comple—*i.e.*, faithfully fulfil.

Prayer (*to be dwelt on and made one's own*).

Hearken, O my Soul; be attentive to the voice of thy God.

Thy loving Father admonishes thee.

How gladly, O my loving Father, shall I listen to Thy voice!

May I faithfully obey Thy commands in my daily life.

II. What does this loving Father say to you?

"Return to Me by the labour of obedience."

"Your sloth of disobedience has led you from Me."

Make answer to your Father:

I will return to Thee.

The labour is trying, but day by day will I obey Thee in every duty.

I will wear out my self-will by fidelity to daily obedience.

I will no longer slothfully take my ease and follow my own will.

II.

Text.

Ad te ergo nunc meus sermo dirigitur, quisquis abrenuntians propriis voluntatibus, Domino Christo verò Regi militaturus, obedientiæ fortissima atque præclara arma sumis.

To thee, therefore, my words are now addressed, whoever thou art that, renouncing thine own will, dost take up the strong and bright weapon of obedience, in order to fight for the Lord Christ, our true King.

Thoughts.

It is well to realize from the very beginning what is the object of the religious life. It is *to renounce your own will* in order *to return to God*. Self-will is the source of all sin. St. Bernard says: "What does God hate or punish except self-will? Let self-will cease, and there will be no hell. On what does that fire feed except on self-will?"

How is self-will to be defeated? St. Benedict puts into your hand a weapon bright and strong—viz., obedience. Obedience is a *weapon—i.e.*, it is to be used to attack the enemy and to defend yourself.

It is *bright* and *strong*, because it is a most effective weapon against self.

The daily labour of obedience attacks self at every moment of the day.

Consider that you must not fight as one "beating the air." Therefore examine your daily life in detail. Notice how this enemy—self—intrudes into every action of the day. Examine your prayers, your work, your spirit of charity, your humility. Can you truthfully say that you have come not to do your own will, but the will of Him Who sent you? Make use of your obedience to attack some form of self-seeking.

Prayer.

My Father, I will accept Thy terms.

Abrenuntians propriis voluntatibus. I see that I cannot, in any true sense, be Thy disciple unless I fight continuously against my self-will.

May I check my self-will in every duty.

May I use every obedience actively against myself.

May I value what is hard to bear, because it will break my self-will.

May I rejoice at every blow this my enemy receives.

Domino Christo militaturus. I fight under the banner of Jesus Christ.

He was obedient even unto death.

Gird me, O Lord, with this bright weapon of obedience.

Give me wisdom to see its power.

Give me skill in its use.

I am Thy soldier; I fight in Thy cause; self is the enemy.

Help me to subdue my slothful self.

Not my will, but Thine be done.

III.

Text.

In primis, ut quidquid agendum inchoas bonum, ab eo perfici instantissima oratione deposcas; ut, qui nos jam in filiorum dignatus est numero computare, non debeat aliquando de malis actibus nostris contristari. Ita enim ei omni tempore de bonis suis in nobis parendum est; ut non solum, ut iratus pater, non aliquando filios suos exhæredet; sed nec, ut metuendus Dominus, irritatus malis nostris, ut nequissimos servos, perpetuam tradat ad pœnam qui eum sequi noluerint ad gloriam. Exurgamus ergo tandem aliquando, excitante nos Scriptura, ac dicente: "*Hora est jam nos de somno surgere.*" Et apertis oculis nostris ad deificum lumen, attonitis auribus audiamus, divina quotidie clamans quid nos admoneat vox dicens: "*Hodie si vocem ejus audieritis, nolite obdurare corda vestra.*" . . . Et quid dicit? "*Venite, filii, audite me; timorem Domini docebo vos. Currite, dum lumen vitæ habetis, ne tenebræ mortis vos comprehendant.*"

In the first place, whatever good work thou beginnest to do, beg of Him with most earnest prayer to perfect; that He Who hath now vouchsafed to count us in the number of His children, may not at any time be grieved by our evil deeds. For we must always so serve Him with the good things He hath given us, that He may never as an angry Father disinherit His children; nor as a dreadful Lord, incensed by our sins, deliver us to punishment as most wicked servants, who would not follow Him to glory. Let us then at length arise, since the Scripture stirreth us up, saying: "It is time now for us to rise from sleep." And our eyes being opened to the deifying light, let us hear with wondering ears what the Divine Voice admonisheth us, daily crying out: "To-day if ye shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts." . . . And what sayeth He? "Come, my children, hearken to Me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Run while ye have the light of life, lest the darkness of death seize hold of you."

Thoughts.

We have considered the call of God to rouse ourselves from our sloth and pleasure to return to Him. We have to overcome self by the labour of obedience. We have accepted a great responsibility, and must look to God for help to be faithful. It is God Who has begun the work, and it is God Who brings it to perfection. St. Benedict puts before us the motives of love and fear.

Prayer.

May I realize my weakness and dependence on Thee, O my God.

Instantissima oratione deposcas. I shall fail in my purpose unless Thou dost help me.

I will beg Thy help frequently and earnestly.

In filiorum numero. Thou hast deigned to make me one of Thy children.

My Father, I will try never to grieve Thee by my wickedness.

Thou hast given me many gifts of nature and of grace.

I will serve Thee with them all my days.

Iratus pater. If I am faithless, Thou wilt be angry.

Perpetuam tradat ad poenam. If I refuse to follow Thee to Heaven, Thou wilt chastise me in Thy wrath, and send me to eternal punishment.

Exurgamus. Therefore, rouse yourself, open your eyes to the Light, and your ears to God's voice.

It is time now to rise from my sloth and tepidity.

Hodie si vocem. *To-day* I will obey God's voice.

Nolite obdurare. No longer will I harden my heart.

Timorem Domini docebo vos. Death is near, and Thy Judgment, O God! Teach me Thy fear. May I work while it is yet day, "for the night cometh, when no man can work."

Ne tenebrae mortis. May I run in Thy ways while I have the light of life, lest the darkness of death seize me.

IV.

Text.

Et quærens Dominus in multitudine populi, cui hæc clamat, operarium suum, iterum dicit: "*Quis est homo, qui vult vitam, et cupit videre dies bonos?*" Quod si tu audiens, respondeas: "Ego"; dicit tibi Deus: "Si vis habere veram et perpetuam vitam, *prohibe linguam tuam a malo, et labia tua ne loquantur dolum. Diverte a malo, et fac bonum; inquire pacem et sequere eam.*"

And the Lord, seeking His own workman in the multitude of the people to whom He thus crieth out, saith again: "Who is the man that will have life, and desireth to see good days?" And if thou, hearing Him, answer, "I am he," God saith to thee: "If thou wilt have true and everlasting life, keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile. Turn from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it."

Thoughts.

Consider that God has called you by a special religious vocation. You have been chosen out of the multitude. You have answered God's call, because you have realized that in His work alone is true life to be found and real happiness. God has called you to be His workman.

Consider what God requires of His workman.

Works; deeds, more than professions.

God says to His workman: Guard the tongue; avoid sin; strive after virtue. Seek and pursue that true peace which comes from self-conquest.

Prayer.

I have offered myself to be Thy *workman*, O my God.

I thank Thee for choosing me out of the multitude of the people.

I will *work* for Thee all the days of my life.

Let me never love the earthly life and happiness.

May I turn from evil, O my Master.

Diverte a malo. May I strive even against lesser sins and imperfections.

May I strive to become virtuous in thought, desire, and deed.

Fac bonum. May Thy will be done, and not mine.

In this way shall I gain Thy peace.

Inquire pacem. The "peace of Christ" is for those who overcome themselves.

Reward my efforts with Thy peace.

May Thy peace accompany all my efforts after virtue.

V.

Text.

Et cum hæc feceritis, oculi mei super vos, et aures meæ ad preces vestras. Et antequam me invocetis, dicam; "Ecce adsum." Quid dulcius nobis hac voce Domini invitantis nos, fratres charissimi? Ecce pietate sua demonstrat nobis Dominus viam vitæ. Succinctis ergo fide, vel observantia bonorum actuum, lumbis nostris, per ducatum Evangelii pergamus itinera ejus. . . . In cujus regni tabernaculo si volumus habitare, nisi illuc bonis actibus currendo, minime pervenitur.

And when you have done these things, My eyes will be upon you, and My ears will be open to your prayers; and before you call upon Me, I will say unto you, "Behold, I am here!" What can be sweeter to us, dearest brethren, than this voice of the Lord inviting us? Behold, in His loving-kindness, the Lord sheweth unto us the way of Life. Having our loins, therefore, girded with faith, and the performance of good works, let us walk in His paths by the guidance of the Gospel. . . . And if we wish to dwell in the tabernacle of His kingdom, we shall by no means reach it unless we run thither by our good deeds.

Thoughts.

"When *you have done these things*, My eyes will be upon you," etc.

Consider how we are too fond of reading and

dreaming of beautiful ideals, and yet our practice remains what it was. This passage tells us that the increase of God's help and His rewards are given in return for deeds. Though we cannot begin the spiritual life without God's action on mind and will, yet the grace given for our subsequent progress depends generally on our faithful correspondence with the help already received. We can, therefore, in a certain sense, look upon spiritual progress as depending upon human effort and perseverance.

Prayer.

Cum hæc fecerítis. Let me begin *to do something* for Thee, my Lord.

Thou dost not wish to reward us first.

Succínctis ergo fide lumbis. We must labour in faith, believing that God will not fail us.

We must be brave enough to take a leap into the dark, trusting in God's promises and help.

"Ecce adsum." "Behold," He says, "I am by your side. My eyes are upon you. Your prayers are heard."

Demonstrat viam vitæ. He invites us, shows us the way of life, and lovingly encourages us.

Quid dulcius. Pergamus itinera Evangelii. How sweet, O Lord, is Thy invitation: how consoling Thy promise. Let me, then, gird myself to Thy work. However rough and dark the ways of perfection are, I will trust in Thee.

I will lead a life of faith, content to believe in Thy word, and content to wait till Thou dost disclose Thyself to me.

I know Thou art with me and wilt help me.

Nisi bonis actibus currendo minime pervenitur.

Let me understand that I must be practical in my endeavours, for I cannot travel the *viam vitæ* except by good deeds—by avoiding sin of every kind, and by performing acts of virtue.

VI.

Text.

Sed interrogemus cum Propheta Dominum, dicentes ei: "*Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo, aut quis requiescet in monte sancto tuo?*" Post hanc interrogationem, fratres, audiamus Dominum respondentem, et ostendentem nobis viam ipsius tabernaculi, ac dicentem: "*Qui ingreditur sine macula, et operatur justitiam; qui loquitur veritatem in corde suo; qui non egit dolum in lingua sua; qui non fecit proximo suo malum, et opprobrium non accepit adversus proximum suum.*"

Qui malignum diabolum aliqua suadentem sibi, cum ipsa suasione sua a conspectibus cordis sui respuens, deduxit ad nihilum, et parvulos cogitatus ejus tenuit, et allisit ad Christum. Qui timentes Dominum, de bona observantia sua non se reddunt elatos, sed ipsa in se bona, non a se posse, sed a Domino fieri existimantes, operantem in se Dominum magnificant, illud cum Propheta dicentes: "*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.*" Sicut nec Paulus Apostolus de prædicatione sua sibi aliquid imputavit, dicens: "*Gratia Dei sum id, quod sum.*"

But let us ask the Lord with the prophet, saying to Him: "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill?" After this question, brethren, let us hear the Lord answering, and showing to us the way to His tabernacle, and saying: "He that walketh without stain and worketh justice; he that speaketh truth in his heart, that hath not done guile with his tongue; he that hath done no evil to his neighbour, and hath not taken up a reproach against his neighbour:" he that hath brought the malignant evil one to naught, casting him out of his heart with all his suggestions, and hath taken his bad thoughts, while they were yet young, and dashed them down at the feet of Christ. These are they who, fearing the Lord, are not puffed up with their own good works, but, knowing that the good which is in them cometh not from themselves, but from the Lord, magnify the Lord Who worketh in them, saying with the prophet: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the

Et iterum ipse dicit: "*Qui gloriatur, in Domino glorietur.*"

Unde et Dominus in Evangelio ait: "*Qui audit verba mea hæc, et facit ea, similabo eum viro sapienti, qui ædificavit domum suam supra petram: venerunt flumina, flaverunt venti, et impegerunt in domum illam, et non cecidit: fundata enim erat supra petram.*" Hæc complens Dominus, expectat quotidie, his suis sanctis monitis, factis nos respondere debere. Ideo nobis propter emendationem malorum, hujus dies vitæ ad inducias relaxantur, dicente Apostolo: "*An nescis, quia patientia Dei ad pœnitentiam te adducit?*" Nam pius Dominus dicit: "*Nolo mortem peccatoris, sed ut convertatur, et vivat.*"

glory." So the Apostle Paul imputed nothing of His preaching to himself, but said: "By the grace of God I am what I am." And again he saith: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Hence also the Lord saith in the Gospel: "He who heareth these words of Mine, and doeth them, is like a wise man who built his house upon a rock: the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, because it was founded upon a rock." And the Lord, in fulfilment of these His words, is waiting daily for us to respond by our deeds to His holy admonitions. Therefore are the days of our life lengthened for the amendment of our evil ways, as saith the Apostle, "Knowest thou not that the patience of God is leading thee to repentance?" For the merciful Lord saith: "I will not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live."

Thoughts.

1. "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill?" (Ps. xiv. 1).

We wish to travel along the "way of life" to the kingdom of God.

Our Lord answers our questions and shows us the way to His kingdom. Let us examine ourselves upon these words of the Psalm; let us pray to our Lord upon the thoughts suggested by them. Do not pass over them hurriedly.

(*a*) He that walketh without stain, and worketh justice;

(*b*) He that speaketh truth in his heart—*i.e.*, is true-hearted, upright, and honest in the eyes of God;

(*c*) He that hath not done guile with his tongue;

(*d*) He that hath done no evil to his neighbour;

(*e*) He that hath not taken up a reproach against his neighbour. St. Benedict then adds:

(*f*) "He that hath taken his bad thoughts, while they were yet young, and dashed them down at the feet of Christ."

2. Such workers as these "are they who, fearing the Lord, are not puffed up with their own good works."

Let us purify our intention by praying upon the texts used by St. Benedict:

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name, give the glory" (Ps. cxiii. 1).

"By the grace of God, I am what I am" (1 Cor. xv. 10).

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (2 Cor. x. 17).

3. "Hence, also, the Lord saith in the Gospel: 'He who heareth these words of Mine, and *doeth them*, is like a wise man who built his house upon a rock. . . .' And the Lord, in fulfilment of these His words, is *waiting daily* for us to respond by *our deeds* to His holy admonitions."

Prayer.

I will be wise and build upon a rock.

I will not be content with *sentiment*, but will do real *work* for Thee, O my Master.

Thou art speaking *daily* to me.

Thou waitest, but I either do not hear Thy words or neglect to obey.

May I now respond by my deeds to Thy holy admonitions.

Let me prove my love for Thee by doing and suffering bravely for Thy sake whenever an opportunity occurs.

VII.

Text.

"Cum ergo interrogassemus Dominum, fratres, de habitatore tabernaculi ejus, audivimus habitandi præceptum; sed si compleamus habitatoris officium, erimus hæredes regni cœlorum. Ergo præparanda sunt corda et corpora nostra sanctæ præceptorum obedientiæ militanda; et quod minus habet in nobis natura possibile, rogemus Dominum, ut gratiæ suæ jubeat nobis adjutorium ministrare. Et si fugientes gehennæ pœnas ad vitam volumus pervenire perpetuam, dum adhuc vacat, et in hoc corpore sumus, et hæc omnia per hanc lucis viam vacat implere, currendum et agendum est modo, quod in perpetuum nobis expediat."

"Since then, brethren, we have asked of the Lord who is to inhabit His temple, we have heard His commands to those who are to dwell there; and if we fulfil those duties, we shall be heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Our hearts, therefore, and our bodies, must be made ready to fight under the holy obedience of His commands; and let us ask God to supply by the help of His grace what by nature is not possible to us. And if we would arrive at eternal life, escaping the pains of hell, then, while there is yet time, while we are still in the flesh, and are able to fulfil all these things by the light which is given us, we must hasten to do now what will profit us for all eternity.

Thoughts.

1. We have heard the commands of God, and must obey if we wish to get to heaven. He has called us to return to Him by the *labour of obedience* —*i.e.*, we have to be *labourers*, using obedience to subject our self-will to the Will of God. Our *hearts* and our *bodies* must be subject to God.

Prayer.

May Thy kingdom come; rule Thou my heart.

Bring into subjection every thought and desire.

Præparanda sunt corda et corpora nostra.

May I think of Thee alone; may I desire naught save Thee.

Put Thy yoke, too, upon my body.

Tame its rebellious nature; check its love of ease and pleasure.

Help my weakness. Give me Thy grace.

Thoughts.

2. Venerable de la Puente used to say: "Do not defer the execution of thy resolutions to a later time, because, if thou dost not perform what thou canst *now*, thou wilt each day become capable of less."

Prayer.

Dum adhuc vacat per hanc lucis viam.

How short the time is! If we wish to accomplish anything we must begin *at once*, whilst the light of grace is with us.

"Confige timore tuo carnes meas (Ps. cxviii.).

Fugientes gehennæ pœnas.

Let me ever remember the uncertainty of life, and fear hell.

Quod in æternum nobis expediat.

May I desire to dwell for ever with Thee in Thy eternal kingdom.

May I use every moment of my life so that it may profit me in eternity.

"Nunc cœpi, hæc mutatio dexteræ excelsi" (Ps. lxxvi.).

VIII.

Text.

Constituenda est ergo nobis Dominici schola servitii; in qua institutione nihil asperum, nihil grave nos constituturos speramus. Sed et si quid paululum restrictius, dictante æquitatis ratione, propter emendationem vitiorum, vel conservationem charitatis processerit, non illico pavore perterritus refugias viam salutis, quæ non est nisi angusto initio incipienda.

We are, therefore, about to establish a school of the Lord's service, in the setting forth of which we hope to order nothing that is harsh or rigorous. But if anything be somewhat strictly laid down, according to the dictates of sound reason, for the amendment of vices or the preservation of charity, do not, therefore, fly in dismay from the way of salvation, whose beginning cannot but be strait and difficult.

Thoughts.

The religious life is a *school*. There are lessons to be learned, labours to be undergone, and probably punishments to be suffered. We must always remain in the position of learners, and spend laborious days. We must be prepared for all this.

The difficulties and dryness met with lead many to lose interest in, and zeal for, the life of mortification and prayer. If they would only persevere until these become habits, they would realize how excellent is the lesson taught by St. Benedict in his school of the service of God.

Prayer.

Si quid paululum restrictius propter emendationem vitiorum.

"Thou dost chastise every one that Thou receivest," O my God.

How can I overcome my vices and turn them into virtues except by brave and persevering effort?

The lessons of virtue and of perfect service are hard and difficult.

O Jesus, Model of patience, teach me how to bear patiently all trials and tests.

Patience will soothe my anger, restrain my tongue, rule my mind, control my concupiscence, and will enable me to carry out the high lessons taught in Thy school.

Non est nisi angusto initio incipienda. I must prepare my soul for trials when I come to Thy service, O my God.

There is no crown for me unless I have fought; no reward unless I have laboured.

I must, then, fly from no labour and no difficulty.

I must be faithful to the Holy Rule, however rigorous it may appear to me.

Refugias viam salutis. May I never fly in dismay from this way of salvation.

All things will become easy and sweet to me if I trust in Thee, O my Lord, and remember Thee in the time of trial.

Make me generous in my aims, and persevering in my efforts.

IX.

Text.

Processu vero conversationis et fidei, dilatato corde, inenarrabili dilectionis dulcedine curritur via mandatorum Dei; ut ab ipsius nunquam magisterio discedentes, in ejus doctrina usque ad mortem in monasterio perseverantes, passionibus Christi per patientiam participemus, ut et regni ejus mereamur esse consortes. Amen.

But as we go forward in our life and in faith, we shall, with hearts enlarged and unspeakable sweetness of love, run the way of God's commandments; so that, never departing from His guidance, but persevering in His teaching in the monastery until death, we may by patience share in the sufferings of Christ, that we may deserve to be partakers of His kingdom. Amen.

Thoughts.

St. Benedict finally encourages us. Fidelity to the observances of our Rule in dark days as in bright days will enlarge our hearts; God's gifts of consolation will be given to us; our strength will increase, and we shall soon *run* the "way of life."

Prayer.

I will never depart from Thy school.

Thou art my Lord and my Teacher.

May I persevere in Thy teaching day by day, year by year, in good health and in ill health, in joy and in sorrow, till my death.

This daily fidelity is my passion. By this do I share in the sufferings of Christ.

By this shall I win the crown and the kingdom of heaven.

By this shall I gain a hundredfold in this life, and afterwards an eternity of bliss. Amen.

CHAPTER I

OF THE SEVERAL KINDS OF MONKS

The Cenobite.

We read the following about Cenobites in this chapter:

(*a*) Primum (genus) Cœnobitarum, hoc est, monasteriale, militans sub regula vel abbate.

The first are the Cenobites—that is, those in monasteries who live under a Rule or an Abbot.

At the end of the chapter St. Benedict says:

(*b*) Ad Cœnobitarum fortissimum genus disponendum, adjuvante Domino, veniamus.

Let us set to work, by the help of God, to lay down a Rule for the Cenobites—that is, the most stable kind of monks.

Thoughts.

(*a*) and (*b*). The *advantages* of a life in the cloister.

Cenobites—*i.e.* monks in their monasteries—are the *strongest* type of religious, or the *safest* type, as the word *fortissimum* is taken to mean by some commentators.

This peculiar fortitude and safety comes to them from perpetual and absolute obedience to the will of another and to the Rule—"militans sub regula vel abbate." It is the daily and ever-present pressure of

obedience, the "probatio diuturna," which makes the Cenobite a skilled fighter against the devil and himself.

In Chapter V. St. Benedict says that good monks *desire* to have a Superior over them. A holy and wise religious, recognizing the immense advantages of subjection to the will of another, desires always to bear this sweet yoke.

Prayer.

Militans. I am Thy soldier, O my King.

Thou teachest me that obedience is my strength.

Fortissimum. Obedience is my greatest safeguard.

Obedience is my chief weapon.

With it I attack not only the indolence of my body, but I overcome the pride of my judgment and the selfishness of my will.

Help me, O my Master, to appreciate holy obedience. Help me to use it *actively* against myself.

Sub regula vel abbate. May I be faithful to my Rule in the smallest particulars.

May I love my Abbot as Thy representative.

May my obedience be not merely an outward compliance, but be always the interior submission of humility.

In speaking of the Hermits, St. Benedict alludes to other advantages of community life.

Qui . . . Monasterii probatione diuturna, didicerunt contra diabolum, multorum solatio jam docti, pugnare; et bene instructi fraterna ex acie, etc.

Who . . . after long probation in the Monastery, have learned by the help and experience of others to fight against the devil; and going forth well armed from the ranks of their brethren, etc.

Thoughts.

It is an art to use the weapon of obedience, and this has to be learned by daily exercise for a long time. Not till we have acquired skill in its use will it be safe for us to leave the ranks of the brethren to work for the souls of others. Consider, also, the *consolations* of community life. How much easier it is to fight in the ranks shoulder to shoulder, ever being stimulated to further effort by the example of those about us, ever learning new ways of using the weapons given to us by seeing the skill and prowess of our brethren.

Prayer.

How good a thing it is, O my God, for brethren to dwell together!

What consolation and help Thou hast given to me!

What a great opportunity of becoming *strong!*

Probatione diuturna. Long probation in the monastery will strengthen me for active life.

Let me profit, O my Master, by all the blessings of my community life.

Let me have clear views about the place of obedience in the spiritual life.

Multorum solatio jam docti. Let my manly use of it encourage those about me.

Let me ever be an example to those with whom I live.

Let me copy their virtues and be blind to their failings.

Help me to make myself into a perfect community man.

May I throw myself with great zeal into the community life, so as to be an example to others and to derive benefit for myself.

THE ANCHORITES.

Text.

Secundum genus est Anachoretarum, id est, Eremitarum, horum qui non conversationis fervore novitio, sed monasterii probatione diuturna, didicerunt contra diabolum, multorum solatio jam docti, pugnare; et bene instructi fraterna ex acie ad singularem pugnam eremi securi jam sine consolatione alterius, sola manu vel brachio, contra vitia carnis vel cogitationum, Deo auxiliante, pugnare sufficiunt.

The second kind are the Anchorites or Hermits—that is, those who, not in the first fervour of religious life, but after long probation in the monastery, have learned by the help and experience of others to fight against the devil; and going forth well armed from the ranks of their brethren to the single-handed combat of the desert, are able, without the support of others, to fight, by the strength of their own arm and the help of God, against the vices of the flesh and their evil thoughts.

Thoughts.

St. Benedict does not expect a religious to lose his first fervour, but to grow to the manhood of the spiritual life, when he will be strong enough to stand alone without exterior helps. In early days it was considered safe for one who had lived in the monastery for twenty years to take up a life of great solitude and recollection (Martène). Alas! how rare it is for one in these days to keep some little of his first fervour and of his generous impulses to a life of self-denial and prayer.

Prayer.

Why, O God, has the fervour of early days produced so little fruit?

The "probatio diuturna" has not been intelligently used.

I have endured rather than applied the daily discipline.

The community exercises and life will not bring me nearer to Thee, unless I try by them to overcome self.

Pugnare contra diabolum. Teach me to use them against the devil and the flesh.

"Domine ut videam"—"Lord, that I may see."

The years pass by, and I am as full of self as ever.

Help me to see clearly and to act bravely.

Bene instructi. If Thou callest me, may I go forth to work for others *well armed*, and skilled in the use of these spiritual weapons.

May I learn now how to fight for Thee, my King.

Ad singularem pugnam eremi. May I grow to love solitude and recollection more and more.

May the time come, O my Beloved, when I shall live for Thee alone, and with Thee alone.

For the present, follow the advice of the Venerable de la Puente: "Be more diligent in mortification than in contemplation, because the unmortified person seeks prayer and finds it not, whilst the mortified person seeks and finds."

The Sarabites.

Text.

Tertium vero monachorum deterrimum genus est Sarabaitarum, qui nulla regula approbati, experientia magistra, sicut aurum fornacis, sed in plumbi natura molliti, adhuc operibus servantes sæculo fidem, mentiri Deo per tonsuram noscuntur. Qui bini aut terni, aut certe singuli sine pastore, non Dominicis, sed suis inclusi ovilibus, pro lege eis est desideriorum voluptas: cum quicquid putaverint vel elegerint, hoc dicunt sanctum, et quod noluerint, hoc putant non licere.

A third and most baneful kind of monks are the Sarabites, who have been tried by no rule, nor by the experience of a master, as gold in the furnace; but, being as soft as lead, and still serving the world in their works, are known by their tonsure to lie to God. These in twos or threes, or even singly, without a shepherd, shut up, not in the Lord's sheepfolds, but in their own, make a law to themselves in their own pleasures and desires. Whatever they think fit or choose to do, that they call holy; and what they like not, that they consider unlawful.

Thoughts.

Such religious are not hardened and tested by living under a Rule and Superior; or if they have, they have not intelligently benefited by the monastic training. They are as soft as lead, and cannot stand against the fire of temptation and difficult surroundings.

They serve the world by loving its ways and its pleasures.

They grow to think as the world thinks, and become unspiritual in their views. Their standards are not those of their Rule.

They do not value interior obedience, and have no spiritual view of self-conquest. They are probably not alone in their opinions and habits of life, for they find congenial companions and form cliques which have a baneful influence upon the rest of the

community. The fundamental and unchanging principles of the religious life, which must always remain true and in force in whatever surroundings a monk may be, are explained away or laughed at as sentimental, unreal, and wanting in common sense.

Though one may say that the description given by St. Benedict is not a true likeness of himself, yet everyone will probably have to accuse himself of some at least of the faults mentioned in this passage of the Rule.

Let us, then, examine ourselves honestly by the help of God's light, humble ourselves in prayer, and realize to what a low standard of view and practice we may sink. Let us fear to lie to God by our tonsure and our habit.

Prayer.

In plumbi natura molliti. My God, teach me to harden myself by regular discipline.

Nulla regula approbati. Purify me of all self-seeking by the practice of interior obedience.

Servantes sæculo fidem. Give me the bravery to abstain from pleasures that are worldly.

Make me an "alien" from the ways of the world.

May I never become worldly in spirit and lie to Thee.

Mentiri Deo per tonsuram. I wear Thy uniform, and I must never be false to Thee.

Let me ever seek the company of those who love Thee, who are spiritual in their views, and monastic in their tastes.

Suis inclusi ovilibus. Be Thou the Shepherd of my soul!

Lead Thou me on! I desire not my own will, but the will of Him Who sent me.

Pro lege eis voluptas. May my lower desires never become a law to me.

May I never justify my lax practice by adopting lax views.

May I constantly revise and meditate upon the great principles of the Holy Rule.

Ignorance of them can never be an excuse.

Help me, O my God, to be clear-sighted, strong and steady in my practice of obedience, and loyal to my monastic vocation wherever Thou dost place me to work. Amen.

THE GIROVAGI.

Text.

Quartum vero genus est monachorum, quod nominatur Girovagum, qui tota vita sua per diversas provincias ternis aut quaternis diebus per diversorum cellas hospitantur, semper vagi et nunquam stabiles, et propriis voluptatibus et gulæ illecebris servientes, et per omnia deteriores Sarabaitis; de quorum omnium horum miserrima conversatione melius est silere, quam loqui.

The fourth kind of monks are those called Girovagi, who spend all their lives long wandering about divers provinces, staying in different cells for three or four days at a time, ever roaming, with no stability, given up to their own pleasures and to the snares of gluttony, and worse in all things than the Sarabites. Of the most wretched life of these it is better to say nothing than to speak.

Thoughts.

The Girovagi as described here are perhaps extinct. But are you a "restless roamer without stability"?

Restlessness may attack one in the monastery. It may appear in your dislike for regular steady work, especially of work which keeps you to your desk in

the solitude of your cell. Are you beginning to give in to this restlessness by seeking external active work in order to avoid recollection and study? Are you anxious for change and excitement? This restlessness has to be checked if the interior life is to grow.

The question of mortification in food and drink is important for one who wishes to be spiritual. Spiritual writers say that one of the last immortifications of a spiritual man is a too great pleasure in food and drink.

A clear view should be obtained on this matter, and advice should be asked (see Chapters XXXIX. and XL.).

Examine yourself carefully on these points. From this chapter conceive a true idea of the life of a monk. Form an ideal in your mind, and wherever obedience may place you, resolve to live up to it as far as you can, and never let the idea grow indistinct.

Prayer.

Per diversorum cellas hospitantur, semper vagi.

Keep to thy cell diligently, O my soul, and it will guard thee.

O my God, what safer place can there be for Thy servant?

Here I may pray to Thee with undistracted mind.

Outside my cell are dangers of every kind; within I find the quiet happiness of a devout life.

If I love my cell and stay willingly in it, I shall escape many sins and temptations.

When I find Thee, O my God, in the quiet and retirement of my cell, then I shall grow to love it.

Gulæ illecebris servientes.

If I try to escape from it and seek distraction without, then Thy face will be hidden from me.

Avete solitudinis	Hail, ye gentle dwellers in the solitude of the cloister !
Claustrique mites incolæ.	Thou didst despise the tainted pleasures of the world.
Vobis olus cibaria	Scanty herb and running brook,
Fuere, vel legumina	All your simple fare supplied;
Potumque lympha præbuit	All your rest the chilly rock
Humusque dura lectulum.	Hollowed in the mountain-side.

—*Vesper Hymn, All Saints O.S.B.*

O Holy Father St. Benedict, and you, his children, "whom the Lord has given to him," pray for your brethren on earth.

May we despise the distractions and false pleasures of this world.

May we love solitude and prayer, and ever bravely mortify the desires of the flesh.

CHAPTER II

WHAT KIND OF MAN THE ABBOT OUGHT TO BE

Text.

Abbas, qui præesse dignus est monasterio, semper meminisse debet, quod dicitur, et nomen majoris factis implere. Christi enim agere vices in monasterio creditur, quando ipsius vocatur prænomine, dicente Apostolo: "Accepistis spiritum adoptionis filiorum, in quo clamamus, Abba, Pater" (Rom. viii. 15). Ideoque Abbas nihil extra præceptum Domini (quod absit) debet docere, aut constituere vel jubere: sed jussio ejus vel doctrina fermentum divinæ justitiæ in discipulorum mentibus conspergatur.

An Abbot who is worthy to rule over the monastery ought always to remember what he is called, and correspond to his name by his works. For he is considered to hold the place of Christ in the monastery, since he is called by His name, as the Apostle saith: "Ye have received the spirit of the adoption of children, in which we cry, Abba, Father." And therefore the Abbot ought not (God forbid) to teach, or ordain, or command anything contrary to the law of the Lord; but let his bidding and his doctrine be infused into the minds of his disciples like the leaven of Divine justice.

Thoughts.

ST. BENEDICT sets before us a high ideal so as to instil fear into the mind of the Superior and reverence into the mind of the subject.

A Superior has to render himself worthy of the title "Abbot."

We have been adopted as children. Who, then, is our Father?

Jesus Christ.

As He cannot remain visibly with His family, He gives His power and authority to a man.

What a dignity! What a responsibility!

A man has to fill the place of Jesus Christ!

Must not this thought dominate that man's life?

Must he not strive to be Christ-like in all his thoughts, words, and deeds? Must he not strive to exert that personal influence over each of the family committed to him which this position of Father demands?

Yes! His personal holiness, his zeal for the welfare of his children, his example, must be as a leaven in the community.

On the other hand, must not the children be mindful of Him Who is their Father? Must they not recognize Him in the one who is His representative, giving to him that honour, that filial love, that absolute interior and exterior obedience which that exalted position deserves?

To look on the Superior as a mere man like to themselves without remembering God, Whom he represents, is to forget the Heavenly Father who has adopted them in His love as His children.

With what reverence and humility must the teachings, suggestions, and commands of this *Alter Christus* be received by each one!

Prayer.

My Superior holds Thy place in the monastery. Let me ever remember this and all it implies.

"Accepistis spiritum adoptionis filiorum." Thou hast adopted me; give me a filial spirit.

"Dominus regit me, et nihil mihi deerit" (Ps. xxii.).

It is true wisdom and true happiness to be led as a child.

My Superior's voice is Thy voice; his wishes are Thy wishes.

I will, therefore, submit my judgment and my will.

My obedience is an act of *personal devotion* to Thee.

Nomen majoris factis implere. If I am in authority over others, let me prove I am superior to them by my deeds.

Christi agere vices. May I ever remember that I hold Thy place!

Give me the spirit of a Father.

May my teachings have the force of personal holiness behind them, so that I may be as a leaven **Fermentum divinæ justitiæ.** of Divine justice in Thy family. Lift me up and fit me for my work.

Examine your attitude of mind and conduct towards your Superior.

Do you realize all that his sacred office implies?

Do you give to him that entire respect and obedience which you would give to Christ Himself?

Is your faith vivid enough to affect the attitude of your mind and will?

I.—A Warning.

Text.

Memor sit semper Abbas, quia doctrinæ suæ vel discipulorum obedientiæ, utrarumque rerum in tremendo judicio Dei facienda erit discussio, sciatque Abbas, culpæ pastoris incumbere, quicquid in ovibus paterfamilas utilitatis minus potuerit invenire. Tantumdem iterum erit liber, ut si inquieto vel inobedienti gregi pastoris fuerit omnis diligentia attributa, et morbidis earum actibus universa fuerit cura exhibita, pastor earum in judicio Domini absolutus, dicat cum Propheta Domino: "Justitiam tuam non abscondi in corde meo, veritatem tuam et salutare tuum dixi" (Ps. xxxix. 11). Ipsi autem contemnentes spreverunt me. Et tunc demum inobedientibus curæ suæ ovibus pœna sit eis prævalens ipsa mors.

Let the Abbot be ever mindful that at the dreadful judgment of God an account will have to be given both of his own teaching and of the obedience of his disciples. And let him know that to the fault of the shepherd shall be imputed any lack of profit which the father of the household may find in his sheep. Only then shall he be acquitted, if he shall have bestowed all pastoral diligence on his unquiet and disobedient flock, and employed all his care to amend their corrupt manner of life: then shall he be absolved in the judgment of the Lord, and may say to the Lord with the prophet: "I have not hidden Thy justice in my heart; I have declared Thy truth and Thy salvation, but they contemned and despised me." And then at length the punishment of death shall be inflicted on the disobedient sheep.

Thoughts.

One who meditates on this passage will always fear to hold authority over others. It is sufficient responsibility to answer for one's own personal life. Since, however, the sanctity of the community depends in great measure upon the personal influence, teaching, and example of the Superior, there is an added responsibility which is overwhelming. St. Benedict says that the Superior will have to answer not only for any harm done, but for the "lack of

profit"—*i.e.*, for the little progress made in the spiritual life by his community.

The attraction which some may feel to the outward dignity of position and to the trappings of office will fade away when this grave responsibility is understood. In fact, the responsibility would be too great except for the closing thought of this passage—that the Superior will be "absolved in the judgment of the Lord," if he shall have taken all care.

Let us realize how great a burden our Superiors have to bear, and try to lighten it by our generous co-operation with their efforts on our behalf.

Realize, also, your own responsibility in any work you have to do for others.

Prayer.

Let me ever remember, O my Lord, how much the souls of others depend upon my own learning and sanctity.

In tremendo judicio Dei. Not only for myself, but for others, shall I have to answer on the day of judgment.

Culpæ pastoris . . . quicquid in ovibus utilitatis minus: How much nearer to Thee would those depending upon me be if I were more holy!

If they are restless and disobedient, let me show them every care till their wounds are healed.

It is not sufficient for me to hold aloof and to condemn them.

Justitiam tuam non abscondi. I must bring them back to Thee!

May Thy justice grow in my heart! May I always

insist upon the truth and reality of the saving teachings of the spiritual life.

Veritatem tuam dixi. I must not be content to love them myself and to hoard the treasure in my own heart!

I must do my utmost to make others love and value them.

Save Thy sheep, O Shepherd of Souls, from the curse of a disobedient spirit, the spirit of self-will and of self-seeking; for this is the death of all spirituality.

Make me more zealous for my own sanctity, so that I may be able to bring those committed to me nearer to Thee!

II.—The Two-fold Teaching.

Text.

Ergo cum aliquis suscipit nomen Abbatis, duplici debet doctrina suis præesse discipulis; id est, omnia bona et sancta factis amplius, quam verbis ostendere, ut capacibus discipulis mandata Domini verbis proponat: duris vero corde et simplicioribus, factis suis divina præcepta demonstret. Omnia vero quæ discipulis docuerit esse contraria, in suis factis indicet non agenda; ne aliis prædicans, ipse reprobus inveniatur (1 Cor. ix. 27). Ne quando illi dicat Deus peccanti: "Quare tu enarras justitias meas, et assumis testamentum meum per os tuum; tu vero odisti disciplinam, et projecisti sermones

Therefore, when anyone receiveth the name of Abbot, he ought to govern his disciples by a two-fold teaching—that is, he should show forth all goodness and holiness by his deeds rather than by his words, declaring to the intelligent among his disciples the commandments of the Lord by words, but to the hard-hearted and the simple-minded setting forth the divine precepts by the example of his deeds. And let him show by his own actions that those things ought not to be done which he has taught his disciples to be against the law of God, lest, while preaching to others, he should himself become a cast-

meos post te" (Ps. xlix. 16, 17). Et, "Qui in fratris tui oculo festucam videbas, in tuo trabem non vidisti?" (Matt. vii. 3).

away, and God should say to him in his sin: "Why dost thou declare My justice, and take My covenant in thy mouth? Thou hast hated discipline, and hast cast My words behind thee." And again: "Thou who sawest the mote in thy brother's eye, didst thou not see the beam in thine own?"

Thoughts.

A Superior has to teach those for whom he is responsible by a two-fold teaching. There must be, before all, the example of a holy life. The earnest and intelligent may indeed profit by instructions, but the careless and hard-hearted will not be won by words alone, nor will rebukes and severity cure them. They may be forced to outward compliance with rule, but the example of personal holiness will alone win them, and produce a real turning of the heart to God. The Curé d'Ars said to one who complained of poor results in his work for others: "Have you done penance for them yet?" It is not sufficient for a Superior to be a sign-post on the "way of life"; he must travel that way himself and be ahead of the others.

Prayers.

I ask of Thee, my God, the gift of wisdom.

Mandata verbis proponat. Give me the knowledge necessary to instruct others.

May I spare no labour to fit myself to work for souls.

Factis præcepta demonstret. May I show forth Thy law by the goodness and holiness of my life.

May I never preach what I do not practise, lest I become a castaway.

"Quare tu enarras": How dare I, a sinner, declare Thy justice to others?

I have hated discipline, and have cast Thy words behind me.

When I am a lover of discipline, then others will be won by my example.

Have I not said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Help me to influence all by my good example, and to keep these precious souls for Thee.

In fratris oculo festucam videbas. I have seen faults in others and corrected them, and perhaps felt bitterly about them, when all the time the cause of them was the bad example of my careless and selfish life.

III.—Avoid Partiality.

Text.

Non ab eo persona in monasterio discernatur. Non unus plus ametur, quam alius, nisi quem in bonis actibus, aut obedientia invenerit meliorem. Non convertenti ex servitio præponatur ingenuus, nisi alia rationabilis causa existat. Quod si ita, justitia dictante, Abbati visum fuerit, et de cujuslibet ordine id faciat; sin alias, propria teneant loca: quia sive servus, sive liber, omnes in Christo unum sumus, et sub uno Domino æqualem servitutis mili-

Let him make no distinction of persons in the monastery. Let not one be loved more than another, unless he be found to excel in good works or in obedience. Let not one of noble birth be put before him that was formerly a slave, [unless some other reasonable cause exist for it. But if upon just consideration it should so seem good to the Abbot, let him arrange as he please concerning the place of any one whomsoever; but, otherwise, let them keep their own

tiam bajulamus: "*Quia non est personarum acceptio apud Deum.*" Solummodo in hac parte apud ipsum discernimur, si meliores aliis in operibus bonis, et humiles inveniamur. Ergo æqualis sit omnibus ab eo charitas; una præbeatur omnibus, secundum merita, disciplina.

places; because, whether bond or free, we are all one in Christ, and bear an equal rank in the service of one Lord: for with God there is no respecting of persons. Only for one reason are we preferred in His sight, if we be found to surpass others in good works and in humility. Let the Abbot, then, show equal love to all, and let the same discipline be imposed upon all according to their deserts.

Thoughts.

Let there be no distinction of persons in the monastery. All must be loved equally. A greater love is allowed for those only who win our respect by their good actions and spirit of obedience. An "equal love" does not mean similarity of treatment, as is clear from the next section.

Better treatment is not to be given to one because he is from a better home and has more influential parents. One with poor connections must receive as good treatment, and have as much interest taken in him, as anyone else. The principle given to us by St. Benedict is that we are all one in Christ, and God is no respecter of persons, and therefore we must not be. This principle is the foundation of Christian charity, and is the only one which will give us the true apostolic spirit in working for others. We must not love the highly connected and attractive more than those who are of humble origin, and, perhaps, repellent to us.

It was the marvellous carrying out of this amongst the early Christians which filled the pagan world

with astonishment. We must train ourselves to care for the "poor, halt, and the lame," if anything, more than others, because they have greater need of our help. We are sent to minister to the sick. Let this be our rule in dealing with souls, whether they be in the monastery, or in schools, or in the world.

Prayer.

We are all Thy children: Thou art our Father.

Omnes in Christo unum sumus. We are members of one family, therefore the needs of one are the needs of all.

Thy Son has died for us. The soul of each one has been purchased at a great price, and therefore is of great value in Thy sight.

Æqualis sit omnibus ab eo charitas. Let me, then, love and value every soul.

Let me burn to bring souls to Thee.

Sub uno Domino æqualem militiam. We have all the same Lord, and an equal rank of service.

Whether bond or free, rich or poor, clever or dull, we are all one in Christ.

If anyone is unsatisfactory or deficient in any way, may I for that very reason do all that I can to help to win back that soul to Thee.

I will be a friend to those who have few friends.

I will give sympathy to those who are in trouble.

I will labour for those who are in need.

Let me encourage all by the fidelity of my own service of Thee.

Fill me with zeal for the souls of all, but especially for those who need the help of another.

May I be all things to all men for Christ's sake.

IV.—Method of Correction.

Text.

In doctrina namque sua Abbas Apostolicam debet illam semper formam servare, in qua dicitur: "*Argue, obsecra, increpa.*" Id est, miscens temporibus tempora, terroribus blandimenta: dirum magistri, pium patris ostendat affectum: id est, indisciplinatos et inquietos debet durius arguere; obedientes autem, et mites et patientes, ut melius proficiant, obsecrare; negligentes autem et contemnentes, ut increpet et corripiat, admonemus. Neque dissimulet peccata delinquentium, sed mox, ut cœperint oriri, radicitus ea, ut prævalet, amputet: memor periculi Heli sacerdotis de Silo. Et honestiores quidem, atque intelligibiles animos, prima vel secunda admonitione verbis corripiat; improbos autem, et duros, ac superbos, vel inobedientes, verberum vel corporis castigatione in ipso initio peccati coerceat, sciens scriptum: "*Stultus verbis non corrigitur.*" Et iterum: "*Percute filium tuum virga, et liberabis animam ejus a morte.*"

For the Abbot in his doctrine ought always to observe the bidding of the Apostle, wherein he says: "Reprove, entreat, rebuke": mingling, as occasions may require, gentleness with severity; showing now the rigour of a master, now the loving affection of a father, so as sternly to rebuke the undisciplined and restless, and to exhort the obedient, mild, and patient to advance in virtue. And such as are negligent and haughty we charge him to reprove and correct. Let him not shut his eyes to the faults of offenders; but as soon as they appear, let him strive with all his might to root them out, remembering the fate of Heli, the priest of Silo. Those of good disposition and understanding let him, for the first or second time, correct only with words; but such as are forward and hard of heart, and proud, or disobedient, let him chastise with bodily stripes at the very first offence, knowing that it is written: "The fool is not corrected with words"; and again: "Strike thy son with the rod, and thou shalt deliver his soul from death."

Meminisse debet semper Abbas quod est, meminisse quod dicitur, et scire quia cui plus committitur, plus ab eo exigitur: sciatque quam difficilem et arduam rem suscepit, regere animas, et multorum servire moribus. Et alium quidem blandimentis, alium vero in-

The Abbot ought always to remember what he is, and what he is called, and to know that to whom more is committed, from him more is required; and he must consider how difficult and arduous a task he hath undertaken, of ruling souls and adapting himself to many dis-

crepationibus, alium suasionibus, et secundum uniuscujusque qualitatem vel intelligentiam, ita se omnibus conformet et aptet, ut non solum detrimenta gregis sibi commissi non patiatur, verum etiam in augmentatione boni gregis gaudeat.

positions. Let him so accommodate and suit himself to the character and intelligence of each, winning some by kindness, others by reproof, others by persuasion, that he may not only suffer no loss in the flock committed to him, but may even rejoice in their virtuous increase.

Thoughts.

One of the chief difficulties in the art of ruling is to know *how* to correct. Nearly every religious has some form of authority over others. We have here wise advice, and would do well to study this section of the chapter. A Superior must not be afraid of striking hard when occasion demands it. When dealing with proud and self-sufficient characters, St. Benedict tells him to strike at the fault *at once*, for strong characters are difficult to correct once a fault has got root. In fact, the Superior should mingle reproofs, entreaties, and rebukes as occasions may require.

It is a mistaken idea of kindness to shut his eyes to the faults of those under him.

St. Benedict's teaching, however, is that "gentleness" should predominate: "Let him always exalt mercy above judgment" (Chapter LXIV.).

Prayer.

Let my responsibility be ever before my mind.

What a grave trust Thou hast imposed upon me!

What a serious account, O my God, I shall have to render to Thee!

Quam difficilem et arduam rem!

Let me realize how difficult and serious a task is mine.

Give me penetration, firmness, gentleness, and sympathy.

Neque dissimulet peccata. Let me never selfishly refrain from correcting when there is need.

May I ever love the sinner whilst I scourge the sin.

Secundum uniuscujusque qualitatem. May I be zealous for each soul committed to me.

May I never lose interest in anyone, however unsatisfactory he may be.

In augmentatione boni gregis gaudeat. May there ever be, as the outcome of my labour, care, and prayer, a steady increase in virtue in every soul Thou hast placed under my charge.

V.—Seek First the Kingdom of God.

Text.

Ante omnia, ne dissimulans, aut parvipendens salutem animarum sibi commissarum, plus gerat sollicitudinem de rebus transitoriis, et terrenis atque caducis; sed semper cogitet quia animas suscepit regendas, de quibus et rationem redditurus est. Et ne causetur forte de minori substantia, meminerit scriptum: "*Primum quærite regnum Dei, et justitiam ejus, et hæc omnia adjicientur vobis.*" Et iterum: "*Nihil deest timentibus eum.*"

Above all, let him not, overlooking or undervaluing the salvation of the souls entrusted to him, be too solicitous for fleeting, earthly and perishable things; but let him ever bear in mind that he hath undertaken the government of souls, of which he shall have to give an account. And that he may not complain for want of worldly substance, let him remember what is written: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." And again: "Nothing is wanting to them that fear Him."

Sciatque quia, qui suscipit animas regendas, præparet se ad rationem reddendam. Et quan-

And let him know that he who hath undertaken the government of souls must prepare himself

tum sub cura sua fratrum se habere scierit numerum, agnoscat pro certo, quia in die judicii ipsarum omnium animarum est redditurus Domino rationem, sine dubio addita et suæ animæ. Et ita timens semper futuram discussionem pastoris de creditis ovibus, cum de alienis ratiociniis cavet, redditur de suis sollicitus. Et cum de admonitionibus suis emendationem aliis subministrat, ipse efficitur a vitiis emendatus.

to render an account of them. And whatever may be the number of the brethren under his care, let him be certainly assured that on the day of judgment he will have to give an account to the Lord of all these souls, as well as of his own. And thus, being ever fearful of the coming inquiry which the Shepherd will make into the state of the flock committed to him, while he is careful on other men's accounts, he will be solicitous also on his own. And so, while correcting others by his admonitions, he will be himself cured of his own defects.

Thoughts.

Men enter the monastery to save their souls, and not to provide for their bodies. The monks choose an Abbot to be their father and guide. He must look, then, to their souls first, and see that he does not give too much of his time and labour to temporal affairs. The Superior is, in the first place, a guide of souls, and, in the second place, a temporal administrator. Let him realize that, for the real well-being of the monastery, it is the quality of the men that matters rather than the quantity of external possessions. Look well after the men, and God will add these other things unto you.

St. Benedict warns the Abbot once more of the account he must render, but adds in conclusion a word of encouragement: "Solicitude for the souls of others will make you solicitous about your own." This advice of our Holy Father to the Abbot is applicable to all religious who have charge of others in any capacity.

Prayer.

Let me never overlook or undervalue these precious souls.

Parvipendens salutem animarum.

Thou hast purchased them at a great price, and hast committed them to my care.

"Primum quærite."

Give me confidence in Thy paternal providence.

Thou hast promised that if I seek Thy kingdom and Thy justice first and above all, Thou wilt give these lesser things to me.

Paret se ad rationem reddendam.

May I prepare myself to render an account to Thee!

I am responsible for every one of the souls under my care.

Quantum numerum agnoscat.

I must not treat them collectively, but be zealous for individuals.

May Thy fear make me careful of the sick sheep, and at the same time a strict judge of my own conduct.

In die judicii redditurus rationem.

May the thought of the day of judgment be ever with me, making me unworldly in my desires, zealous for others and for myself.

Sollicitus.

Ask yourself why certain souls are not happy under your rule. Why do you allow a feeling of estrangement to exist? If they are in the wrong, win them back to better things by charity and prudence. Realize that you cannot shake off your responsibility for their spiritual state.

CHAPTER III

OF CALLING THE BRETHREN TO COUNCIL

Text.

Quoties aliqua præcipua agenda sunt in monasterio, convocet Abbas omnem congregationem, et dicat ipse unde agitur. Et audiens consilium fratrum, tractet apud se, et quod utilius judicaverit faciat. Ideo autem omnes ad consilium vocari diximus: quia sæpe juniori Dominus revelat quod melius est. Sic autem dent fratres consilium cum omni humilitatis subjectione, ut non præsumant procaciter defendere quod eis visum fuerit, sed magis in Abbatis pendeat arbitrio, ut quod salubrius esse judicaverit, ei cuncti obediant: sed sicut discipulis convenit obedire magistro; ita et ipsum provide, et juste condecet cuncta disponere.

In omnibus igitur omnes magistram sequantur regulam, neque ab ea temere declinetur a quoquam. Nullus in monas-

As often as any important matters have to be transacted in the monastery, let the Abbot call together the whole community, and himself declare what is the question to be settled. And, having heard the counsel of the brethren, let him weigh it within himself, and then do what he shall judge most expedient. We have said that all should be called to council, because it is often to the younger that the Lord revealeth what is best. But let the brethren give their advice with all subjection and humility, and not presume stubbornly to defend their own opinion; but rather let the matter rest with the Abbot's discretion, that all may submit to whatever he shall consider best. Yet, even as it becometh disciples to obey their master, so doth it behove him to order all things prudently and with justice.

Let all, therefore, follow the Rule in all things as their guide, and from it let no man rashly turn aside. Let no one in the

terio sequatur cordis proprii voluntatem, neque præsumat quisquam cum Abbate suo proterve intus, aut foris monasterium contendere. Quod si præsumpserit, regulari disciplinæ subjaceat. Ipse tamen Abbas cum timore Dei, et observatione regulæ omnia faciat; sciens se procul dubio de omnibus judiciis suis æquissimo judici Deo rationem redditurum. Si qua vero minora agenda sunt in monasterii utilitatibus, seniorum tantum utatur consilio, sicut scriptum est: "*Omnia fac cum consilio, et post factum non pœnitebis.*"

monastery follow the will of his own heart; nor let anyone presume insolently to contend with his Abbot either within or without the monastery. But if he should dare to do so, let him be subjected to the discipline appointed by the Rule. The Abbot himself, however, must do everything with the fear of God and in observance of the Rule; knowing that he will have without doubt to render to God, the most just Judge, an account of all his judgments. If it happen that less important matters have to be transacted for the good of the monastery, let him take counsel with the seniors only, as it is written: "Do all things with counsel, and thou shalt not afterwards repent it."

Thoughts.

In this chapter we have the duties of Superiors and subjects still further explained.

"Do all things with counsel, and thou shalt not afterwards repent it" (Ecclus. xxxii. 24).

Anyone with authority must act cautiously, and take every means to arrive at a correct decision. He must hear what others think before acting. When the matter is grave he must consult everyone, even the youngest. A Superior, however, must remember that the ultimate responsibility rests upon himself, and he cannot move it to the shoulders of others. St. Benedict, whilst giving great power to a Superior, does not allow him to act arrogantly or unjustly. Fearing God, he must obey the Rule in all things.

St. Benedict does not forbid the subject to state

his opinion, but he must do so with all subjection and humility; he must be ready to submit to the judgment of the Superior, and not stubbornly defend his own view, otherwise he is not guided by the Spirit of God, which ever breathes humility and peace.

There are two golden maxims given for the disciple's guidance: "Discipulis convenit obedire"—"It becometh disciples to obey"—and "Nullus in monasterio proprii sequatur cordis voluntatem"—"Let no one in the monastery follow the will of his own heart." If these maxims were taken as guides, they would preserve the monastic spirit ever fresh. A religious comes to the monastery to renounce his own will, as St. Benedict tells us in the prologue. If, then, a religious lives in the spirit of independence, he is no true disciple of his. The Fathers of the desert looked upon renunciation of self-will as all in all.

Prayer.

Thou, O my Divine Master, wouldst have us renounce "self" even when we are in authority over others.

Pride and self-sufficiency are hateful to Thee, the most humble and obedient of men.

Thy guidance is not given to those who seek it not in humility.

If I were humble, I should hear Thy guiding voice, and recognize it even when it comes from the lips of the young and simple.

Sæpe juniori Dominus revelat.

Let me rule over others with fear of Thy judgments.

Cum omni humilitatis subjectione. Save me from an independent spirit.

May I ever obey Thy voice in the Rule.

Abbatis pendeat arbitrio . . . et cuncti obediant. To my Superiors may I yield true interior obedience; refusing to use my judgment against their judgments, bending my will to their wishes.

This is the true road to sanctity, for it is the road of humility.

Nullus sequatur cordis voluntatem. I will never follow the will of my own heart.

I will repeat frequently the following maxims, and rule my actions according to them.

"Discipulis convenit obedire" — "It becometh disciples to obey."

"Nullus in monasterio proprii sequatur cordis voluntatem"—"Let *no one* in the monastery follow the will of his own heart."

Text.

In omnibus igitur omnes magistram sequantur regulam, neque ab ea temere declinetur a quoquam.

Let all, therefore, follow the Rule in all things as their guide and from it let no man rashly turn aside.

Thoughts.

"Let all follow the Rule in all things as their guide." This is another fundamental maxim for our guidance. In Chapter LVIII., on Probation and Profession, we shall see how firmly and

solemnly we bind ourselves to the Holy Rule. St. Benedict, in Chapter LVIII., insists on a thorough knowledge of the Rule before a novice can be admitted to profession. Three times during the course of the noviciate must it be read to him with these words: "Behold the law under which you wish to fight." If, after mature deliberation, the novice wishes to bear the yoke of the Rule, he may be admitted to profession. He vows to direct himself *according to the Rule*, and thus solemnly chooses it for his guide and promises to obey it.

He must, then, know every word of it. It must be his handbook of spirituality, and other spiritual books should be as companions to it merely. The Rule must remain his text-book, and other books the development and commentary upon it. The monastic spirit is set before us in the pages of the Holy Rule. This "spirit" is essential to the monastic life, and must, therefore, be cherished and fostered with the greatest care. Though the externals of the monastic life have undergone certain modifications, yet the spirit of St. Benedict must live for ever amongst his children, and that spirit is to be found in the pages of his Rule; as St. Gregory says: "The holy man could not in any way teach otherwise than he lived."

Prayer.

Stir up, O Lord, within us the spirit of our Father, St. Benedict.

May we be zealous to love what he loved.

May we carry out in deed what he has taught us.

Thou dost speak to me by St. Benedict.

Thy voice, O my Master, guides me in the Rule.

How wrong of me not to listen!

How rash to turn aside from its guidance!

I renew my promise to Thee, of obedience according to the Rule.

I will frequently meditate upon it.

Its maxims shall rule my conduct.

Its precepts shall be obeyed by me.

It shall be my constant companion during life.

May I have the consolation, when my life is drawing to its close, of knowing that I have kept my vow and have lived according to the Holy Rule, and can therefore go with confidence to render an account to my Judge.

CHAPTER IV

WHAT ARE THE INSTRUMENTS OF GOOD WORKS?

1. Primum instrumentum: In primis, Dominum Deum diligere ex toto corde, tota anima, tota virtute.
2. Deinde proximum tamquam seipsum.
3. Deinde non occidere.
4. Non adulterari.
5. Non facere furtum.
6. Non concupiscere.
7. Non falsum testimonium dicere.
8. Honorare omnes homines.
9. Et quod sibi quis fieri non vult, alii non faciat.
10. Abnegare semetipsum sibi, ut sequatur Christum.
11. Corpus castigare.
12. Delicias non amplecti.
13. Jejunium amare.
14. Pauperes recreare.
15. Nudum vestire.
16. Infirmum visitare.
17. Mortuum sepelire.
18. In tribulatione subvenire.
19. Dolentem consolari.
20. A seculi actibus se facere alienum.
21. Nihil amori Christi præponere.
22. Iram non perficere.

1. In the first place, to love the Lord God with all one's heart, all one's soul, and all one's strength.
2. Then one's neighbour as oneself.
3. Then not to kill.
4. Not to commit adultery.
5. Not to steal.
6. Not to covet.
7. Not to bear false witness.
8. To honour all men.
9. Not to do to another what one would not have done to oneself.
10. To deny oneself, in order to follow Christ.
11. To chastise the body.
12. Not to seek after delicate living.
13. To love fasting.
14. To relieve the poor.
15. To clothe the naked.
16. To visit the sick.
17. To bury the dead.
18. To help in affliction.
19. To console the sorrowing.
20. To keep aloof from worldly actions.
21. To prefer nothing to the love of Christ.
22. Not to give way to anger.

23. Iracundiæ tempus non reservare.
24. Dolum in corde non tenere.
25. Pacem falsam non dare.
26. Charitatem non derelinquere.
27. Non jurare, ne forte perjuret.
28. Veritatem ex corde, et ore proferre.
29. Malum pro malo non reddere.
30. Injuriam non facere, sed factam patienter sufferre.
31. Inimicos diligere.
32. Maledicentes se non remaledicere, sed magis benedicere.
33. Persecutiones pro justitia sustinere.
34. Non esse superbum.
35. Non vinolentum.
36. Non multum edacem.
37. Non somnolentum.
38. Non pigrum.
39. Non murmurosum.
40. Non detractorem.
41. Spem suam Deo committere.
42. Bonum aliquod in se cum viderit, Deo applicet, non sibi.
43. Malum vero semper a se factum sciat, et sibi reputet.
44. Diem judicii timere.
45. Gehennam expavescere.
46. Vitam æternam omni concupiscentia spirituali desiderare.
47. Mortem quotidie ante oculos suspectam habere.
48. Actus vitæ suæ omni hora custodire.
49. In omni loco Deum se respicere, pro certo scire.
50. Cogitationes malas cordi

23. Not to harbour a desire of revenge.
24. Not to foster guile in one's heart.
25. Not to make a feigned peace.
26. Not to forsake charity.
27. Not to swear, lest perchance one forswear oneself.
28. To utter truth from heart and mouth.
29. Not to render evil for evil.
30. To do no wrong to anyone —yea, to bear patiently wrong done to oneself.
31. To love one's enemies.
32. Not to render cursing for cursing, but rather blessing.
33. To bear persecution for justice' sake.
34. Not to be proud.
35. Not given to wine.
36. Not a glutton.
37. Not drowsy.
38. Not slothful.
39. Not a murmurer.
40. Not a detractor.
41. To put one's hope in God.
42. To attribute any good one sees in oneself to God, and not to oneself.
43. But to recognize and always impute to oneself the evil that one doth.
44. To fear the day of judgment.
45. To be in dread of hell.
46. To desire with all spiritual longing everlasting life.
47. To keep death daily before one's eyes.
48. To keep guard at all times over the actions of one's life.
49. To know for certain that God sees one everywhere.
50. To dash down at the feet

suo advenientes mox ad Christum allidere.

51. Et seniori spirituali pate-facere.

52. Os suum a malo, vel pravo eloquio custodire.

53. Multum loqui non amare.

54. Verba vana aut risui apta non loqui.

55. Risum multum aut excussum non amare.

56. Lectiones sanctas libenter audire.

57. Orationi frequenter incumbere.

58. Mala sua præterita cum lacrymis vel gemitu quotidie in oratione Deo confiteri, et de ipsis malis de cætero emendare.

59. Desideria carnis non perficere. Voluntatem propriam odire.

60. Præceptis Abbatis in omnibus obedire, etiam si ipse aliter (quod absit) agat, memor illius Dominici præcepti: "*Quæ dicunt, facite, quæ autem faciunt, facere nolite.*"

61. Non velle dici sanctum, antequam sit, sed prius esse, quo verius dicatur.

62. Præcepta Dei factis quotidie adimplere.

63. Castitatem amare.

64. Nullum odire.

65. Zelum et invidiam non habere.

66. Contentionem non amare.

67. Elationem fugere.

68. Seniores venerari.

69. Juniores diligere.

70. In Christi amore pro inimicis orare.

71. Cum discordante ante solis occasum in pacem redire.

of Christ one's evil thoughts the instant that they come into the heart.

51. And to lay them open to one's spiritual father.

52. To keep one's mouth from evil and wicked words.

53. Not to love much speaking.

54. Not to speak vain words and such as move to laughter.

55. Not to love much or excessive laughter.

56. To listen willingly to holy reading.

57. To apply oneself frequently to prayer.

58. Daily to confess one's past sins with tears and sighs to God, and to amend them for the time to come.

59. Not to fulfil the desires of the flesh: to hate one's own will.

60. To obey in all things the commands of the Abbot, even though he himself (which God forbid!) should act otherwise; being mindful of that precept of the Lord: "What they say, do ye; but what they do, do ye not."

61. Not to wish to be called holy before one is so; but first to be holy, that one may be truly so called.

62. Daily to fulfil by one's deeds the commandments of God.

63. To love chastity.

64. To hate no man.

65. Not to give way to jealousy and envy.

66. Not to love strife.

67. To fly from vain-glory.

68. To reverence the seniors.

69. To love the juniors.

70. To pray for one's enemies in the love of Christ.

71. To make peace with an adversary before the setting of the sun.

72. Et de Dei misericordia nunquam desperare.

Ecce hæc sunt instrumenta artis spiritualis: quæ cum fuerint a nobis die noctuque incessabiliter adimpleta, et in die judicii reconsignata, illa merces nobis a Domino recompensabitur, quam ipse promisit: "*Quod oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quæ præparavit Deus his qui diligunt eum.*" Officina vero, ubi hæc omnia diligenter operemur, claustra sunt monasterii, et stabilitas in Congregatione.

72. And never to despair of the mercy of God.

Behold, these are the tools of the spiritual craft, which, if they be constantly employed day and night, and duly given back on the day of judgment, will gain for us from the Lord that reward which He Himself hath promised—"which the eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for them that love Him." And the workshop where we are to labour at all these things is the cloister of the monastery, and stability in the community.

Introductory Note.

St. Benedict compares the spiritual life to an art or handicraft; and the monastery to a workshop in which the spiritual craftsmen are busily engaged.

In this chapter we have the tools of the workshop. We must be skilled in their use, and use them when the need arises. An objection may be urged that there are too many of them, and that they could never be remembered, and that they cannot, therefore, become practical rules of conduct. This difficulty may be overcome by grouping them under headings, and by taking a group at a time for careful meditation and practice. We shall in this way become familiar with them, and be able to use them for our sanctification as the Holy Rule commands.

GROUP I.—MORTIFICATION.

(A) *Interior mortification.*

Obedience.

Humility.

(B) *Exterior or bodily mortification.*

GROUP II.—PRAYER.

The preparation for.

The prayer.

The resolution.

GROUP III.—CHARITY.

Courtesy.

Tenderness and patience.

Forgiveness.

GROUP IV.—THE FOUR LAST THINGS AND HOPE.

GROUP I.—MORTIFICATION—GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ALL MORTIFICATION.

10. Abnegare semetipsum sibi, ut sequatur Christum.
21. Nihil amori Christi præponere.

10. To deny oneself, in order to follow Christ.
21. To prefer nothing to the love of Christ.

(A) Interior Mortification.

Obedience.

39. Non murmurosum.
59. Desideria carnis non perficere: voluntatem propriam odire.
60. Præceptis Abbatis in omnibus obedire, etiam si ipse aliter (quod absit) agat, memores illud Dominicum præceptum: "Quæ autem faciunt, facere nolite."

39. Not a murmurer.
59. Not to fulfil the desires of the flesh: to hate one's own will.
60. To obey in all things the commands of the Abbot, even though he himself (which God forbid!) should act otherwise, being mindful of that precept of the Lord: "What they say do ye; but what they do, do ye not."

Humility.

34. Non esse, superbum.
42. Bonum aliquod in se cum viderit Deo applicet, non sibi.

43. Malum vero semper a se factum sciet et sibi reputet.

61. Non velle dici sanctum antequam sit, sed prius esse, quo verius dicatur.

34. Not to be proud.
42. To attribute any good one sees in oneself to God, and not to oneself.

43. But to recognize and always impute to oneself the evil that one doth.

61. Not to wish to be called holy before one is so, but first to be holy, that one may be truly called so.

Thoughts.

The object of all mortification is well stated in Instrument 10. It is to kill self-love and self-seeking, which spoil the purity of our love and service of God.

Since self-love is interior—*i.e.*, in the will—mortification, to be of use, must be interior or interiorly applied.

Interior mortification is, therefore, our first duty. Its work is to reform our natural characters and to *root up* our evil tendencies. The best interior mortifications are obedience, humility, and prayer.

In the instruments quoted above, St. Benedict states briefly, and in words which we can remember, the principles of obedience and humility, which he explains fully in Chapters V. and VII.

The *mortification of obedience* is urged in the commands: "*Hate your own will!*" "*Do not murmur!*" "Obey your Superior *in all things*, whatever he himself may do"; and the *mortification of humility* in: "Be not proud!"

"Do not wish to be called holy before you are really so."

"Do not pride yourself on any progress you may make, but blame yourself for your want of progress."

We will consider these important subjects thoroughly in the chapters dealing with them.

Prayer.

Nihil amori Christi præponere. My one object, O my Jesus, is to follow Thee.

Make me desire to do this with my whole heart.

Do I realize that self-love is my deadly enemy, and the cause of all my sins?

I am so full of *self-love* and *self-seeking*.

Voluntatem propriam odire. How I should *hate* this love of self! How perseveringly should I attack it!

Let me welcome anything which wounds it.

Let me thank the Superior who tries me.

Non murmurosum. How foolish to murmur at anything which wounds my self-love!

A murmurer does not understand what he has come to religion for.

He does not hate his self-love.

He protects it and grumbles at one who hurts it.

Show me my faults. Humble me, for I am very proud.

My good deeds are never forgotten by me, but my evil deeds are easily overlooked.

Bonum aliquod Deo applicet, non sibi. "Non nobis Domine, non nobis sed nomini tuo da gloriam."

Lord, I am not worthy to raise my eyes to heaven.

May I ever deny myself every day, every hour, in every duty.

May I take up my cross daily and follow Thee, else I cannot be Thy disciple.

(B) Exterior or Bodily Mortification.

4. Non adulterari.	4. Not to commit adultery.
6. Non concupiscere.	6. Not to covet.
11. Corpus castigare.	11. To chastise the body.
12. Delicias non amplecti.	12. Not to seek after delicate living.
13. Jejunium amare.	13. To love fasting.
20. A seculi actibus se facere alienum.	20. To keep aloof from worldly actions.
35. Non vinolentum.	35. Not given to wine.
36. Non multum edacem.	36. Not a glutton.
37. Non somnolentum.	37. Not drowsy.
38. Non pigrum.	38. Not slothful.
63. Castitatem amare.	63. To love chastity.

Thoughts.

A mortified man is one who is zealous for self-conquest and purity of soul, as we have already seen. His mortification will instinctively find outward expression for itself. So zealous is he for self-conquest that not only does he welcome every annoyance, trial, hardship, humiliation, and obedience that come to him, but he carries on an active warfare against the pleasure-seeking and slothful body. Those who think that bodily mortification is out of date should carefully consider these instruments. The body must be chastised. It must not be indulged by delicate living or by a worldly life. The appetite for food and drink must be checked, and laziness and slothfulness must be fought against. The monk must love the beautiful virtue of chastity: to pamper the body is to endanger this virtue. St. Jerome, in

an Epistle to the monk Rusticus, writes: "May you not have what you wish; may you eat what you are ordered; may you be clad in what is given to you; may you be subject to whom you do not wish; may you go to rest weary; walking, may you fall to sleep, and may you be roused before your sleep is finished."

If St. Benedict's teaching about "alienation" from the world and bodily mortification was practised more exactly, there would quickly be a restoration of primitive fervour. Father Faber, in "Growth in Holiness," chapter xi., in speaking of mortification, says: "The superior excellence of interior mortification is beyond question; but if there is one doctrine more important than another on this subject, it is that there can be no interior mortification without exterior, and the last must come first. To be spiritual, bodily mortification is indispensable."

Prayer.

Thou hast said: "If thou wilt be perfect, sell all that thou hast."

Corpus castigare. Why, then, do I allow my body to impede my following Thee?

My crucified Master, I am too fond of ease and pleasure.

I do not prefer, as did St. Benedict, to be wearied out by labours for God.

Fasting, hard work, and retirement are as yet burdensome.

When shall I be brave enough to subdue my body?

A seculi actibus se facere alienum. Teach me to hate worldly ways and worldly interests.

Let me despise this present life that I may possess the blessed life.

May I take up my cross bravely.

Its touch will change my cowardice into courage.

The way of the Cross is the way of bliss and of true light.

O happy Cross which merits so many and such great rewards!

"The life of a good religious man is a cross, but it is a cross that conducts him to Paradise" ("Imitation of Christ").

Deny yourself in body and soul in order to follow Christ.

Prefer *nothing* to the love of Christ.

Examine yourself as to whether bodily mortification finds a regular place in your religious life.

There are no saints without heroic bodily mortification.

Cardinal Bona quotes the following remark of James Alvarez: "Few spiritual and religious men have any knowledge of mystical wisdom, because very few there are who courageously deny themselves and are perfectly mortified."

GROUP II.—PRAYER.

Remote Preparation for Prayer.

48. Actus vitæ suæ omni hora custodire.

49. In omni loco Deum se respicere pro certo scire.

50. Cogitationes malas cordi suo advenientes mox ad Christum allidere.

51. Et seniori spirituali patefacere.

56. Lectiones sanctas libenter audire.

48. To keep guard at all times over the actions of one's life.

49. To know for certain that God sees one everywhere.

50. To dash down at the feet of Christ one's evil thoughts the instant that they come into one's heart.

51. And to lay them open to one's spiritual Father.

56. To listen willingly to holy reading.

Prayer.

57. Orationi frequenter incumbere.

57. To apply oneself frequently to prayer.

Its Subject-matter.

58. Mala sua præterita cum lacrymis vel gemitu quotidie in oratione Deo confiteri, et de ipsis malis de cætero emendare.

58. Daily to confess one's past sins with tears and sighs to God, and to amend them for the time to come.

Practical Result.

62. Præcepta Dei factis quotidie adimplere.

62. Daily to fulfil by one's deeds the commands of God.

Thoughts.

Before God will visit us in prayer, our own efforts must first be evident. As Father Faber says: "God will not send His fire if we do not first lay the sacrifice in order."

The "remote preparation" for prayer is essential for good prayer, and perhaps it is the neglect of this which explains the hardness and unspirituality which

creeps into the lives of some religious in spite of the many prayers said by them daily. St. Benedict says to us: "Guard your heart"; "Remember God's presence"; "Check evil thoughts at once"; "Be open with your Director"; "Love holy reading."

The practice of these instruments will result in the religious becoming a man of prayer.

In all the Gospel we can scarcely find a precept so imperative as that of frequent prayer. "We ought always to pray and not to faint"; "Pray always." These texts may receive a too strict or a too lax interpretation: the truth lies between these extremes. We must aspire to uninterrupted prayer; and, on the other hand, we have many duties to perform which make actual prayer impossible. But these duties may be sanctified, and become the prayer of service. To "pray always," then, seems to mean: to be either actually praying, or occupied in something done in virtue of prayer.

If we frequently renew our purity of intention; if, when our duties permit it, our minds gravitate naturally to God, then we may rest assured that the undercurrent of our mind and desire is running to God, and that our labour is truly prayer. St. Augustine says: "If thou dost continually desire God, thou dost continually pray."

The degree of holiness acquired by anyone is to be measured by the influence prayer has upon his actions.

St. Benedict, the Doctor of Humility, desires that the spirit of compunction should have the predominant place in the prayer of his disciples. Daily

must we weep over our sins, and daily strengthen our good resolutions; for it is "the prayer of the humble man that shall pierce the clouds."

The true love of God is rather the love of service than the love of sentiment, and therefore our Holy Father bids us carry out in a practical way the resolutions suggested to us by God in prayer.

We may take two exercises of prayer upon these instruments:

I.—On the Instruments of Preparation for Prayer.

My whole life belongs to Thee, O my God; not merely the actual time I am on my knees before Thee, but every moment of my daily life.

Those pray little and half-heartedly who only pray when kneeling.

Instr. 48. Every action of my life must, then, worship Thee.

My studies, recreations, work for others—all these are Thine. I offer them to Thee.

Instr. 49. Thou art always with me; Thy eyes are ever upon me.

Thou knowest my most secret motives and my most hidden thoughts.

May this truth dominate my life!

Instr. 50. May every unworthy thought and desire be covered with confusion, and fall dead at Thy feet.

Instr. 51. Every failure must be confessed to Thy minister.

I will follow his guidance, that I may go to Thee by the safe road of obedience.

Instr. 56. May I love to read of Thee, and to fill my mind and heart with the words of Thy holy servants.

II.—On Prayer and the Resolution.

Instr. 57. Thou hast said, O my Lord, that the kingdom of God is within me.

Let my soul be as a "garden enclosed," where I may withdraw and speak to Thee.

In the hour of trouble may I fly to Thy sacred feet.

Amidst my work may Thy loving words encourage and Thy presence restrain me.

Instr. 58. Let me regard myself all my days as a guilty sinner before Thee.

Lord, I am not worthy to raise my eyes to Thee.

My sins accuse me; Thy holiness rebukes my sinfulness.

Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst dwell in my heart.

Have mercy on me, O Lord! Still further wash my stains away.

With sighs and tears of repentance may I move Thy pitiful heart.

Instr. 62. Strengthen me in my good purposes; bring my resolutions to a successful issue.

May I prove that I love Thee by the zealous work I do for Thee, by my earnestness in self-conquest, by my daily progress in all virtues.

FATHER DE RAVIGNAN, S.J., ON PRAYER.

Believe me, my dear friends—believe an experience ripened by thirty years in the sacred ministry, I do here affirm that all deceptions, all spiritual deficiencies, all miseries, all falls, all faults, and even the most serious wanderings out of the right path, all proceed from this simple source—a want of constancy in prayer. Live the life of prayer; learn to bring everything, to change everything, into prayer—pains and trials and temptations of all kinds.

Pray in the calm, pray in the storm; pray on waking, and pray during the daytime; going and coming, pray; tired out and distracted, pray; whatsoever your repugnance may be, pray.

Pray that you may learn to pray. "Teach us, O Lord, how to pray" (Luke xi. 1). "But I cannot pray." That is heresy. Yes, you can always pray. If you feel a disgust—nay, a horror of prayer, pray on; pray in spite of yourself, against yourself. Beg for the courage in prayer which our agonizing Saviour merited for you by His pangs in Gethsemane and upon Calvary. *Pray*, for prayer is the strength which saves, the courage which perseveres, the mystic bridge cast over the abyss which joins the soul to God. "And being in an agony, He prayed the longer" (Luke xxii. 43).

GROUP III.—CHARITY.

(A) Courtesy.
(B) Tenderness and Patience.
(C) Forgiveness.

(A) COURTESY.

8. Honorare omnes homines.	8. To honour all men.
66. Contentionem non amare.	66. Not to love strife.
67. Elationem fugere.	67. To fly from vainglory.
68. Seniores venerari.	68. To reverence the seniors.
69. Juniores diligere.	69. To love the juniors.

Thoughts.

A holy man is a humble man, and a humble man is ever courteous, because he has the spirit of reverence. This is an old-world virtue, and is fast dying out. We must remain alien from the spirit of the world in this as in other matters. We should value very highly the laws of monastic courtesy laid down by St. Benedict. The reverence shown to others is an honour and dignity rather to the one who gives than to him who receives it. It is the outward expression of inward humility; it is a supernatural light which adds a dignity to the meanest of God's servants, for by this light Jesus Christ is seen in all. It implies self-control, thought for others, forgetfulness of self; it means there is no self-elation nor spirit of contention; it proves that the supernatural view of obedience is grasped by all, for the seniors receive inward submission and outward veneration from the juniors because they represent Christ in the monastery; and the seniors on

their part, realizing their position as representatives of the kind Father in heaven, show to the young religious a paternal interest and affection.

May this beautiful courtesy ever reign in the houses of our Order. Sad will be the day when the spirit of the world intrudes into the cloister—that spirit of independence, self-assertion, flippancy, and vulgarity; that neglect of external forms of reverence in speech and in action—for this spirit will quickly ruin not only the outward charm of monastic life, but also the inner spirit of humility in the monks.

Prayer.

Instr. 8. I must recognize Thee, O my Master, in all men.

Instr. 68. When I obey my Superiors, I will obey Thee.

When I show them marks of honour, then I will remember Thee.

Instr. 69. Every act of courtesy, kindness, respect, shown to an equal is shown, I believe, to Thee.

Especially art Thou present in the poor and suffering.

I will serve Thee with complete self-forgetfulness in these Thy suffering members.

In short, Thou art all in all to me.

Thy holy presence, in which "I live and move and have my being," must fill me with deepest humility.

Instr. 67. Every form of self-elation or self-assertion must become impossible to one who

remembers Thy greatness and Thy presence in all Thy creatures.

Keep far from us the spirit of the world.

"In honour preventing one another."

Avoiding all forms of pride, may we ever more and more grow like to Thy venerable servant, Benedict.

(B) Tenderness and Patience.

Tenderness.

14. Pauperes recreare.	14. To relieve the poor.
15. Nudum vestire.	15. To clothe the naked.
16. Infirmum visitare.	16. To visit the sick.
17. Mortuum sepelire.	17. To bury the dead.
18. In tribulatione subvenire.	18. To help in affliction.
19. Dolentem consolari.	19. To console the sorrowing.

Patience.

30. Injuriam non facere, sed factam patienter sufferre.	30. To do no wrong to anyone — yea, to bear patiently wrong done to oneself.
33. Persecutionem pro justitia sustinere.	33. To bear persecution for justice' sake.

Thoughts.

St. Benedict imposes the corporal and spiritual works of mercy upon his monks. Benedictine monasteries have ever been the centres of charity, education, and missionary enterprise. There are many examples in St. Benedict's own life which show his charitable zeal for others. This tenderness and interest in others must be characteristic of the individual religious as they have been of the monasteries.

The only consistent kindness of thought for others is that based upon mortification. A religious must be completely unselfish—*i.e.*, mortified—before he will be able to surrender all self-interest cheerfully for the sake of others, to remain tender and patient with all forms of misery, to bear peacefully wrongs done to him by another, and to stand firm for principle without being uncharitable to his opponent. The immortified man quickly grows selfish, callous, hard, and pessimistic in his view of others; but charity surrenders all, embraces all, suffers all, hopes all, believes all.

Prayer.

Give me, O Lord, a truly charitable spirit.

May I ever see Thee in all persons.

May I seek Thee amongst the poor, miserable, and suffering.

May I pour oil and wine into Thy Sacred Wounds; for what I do to others is done, I believe, to Thee.

The outward work is of no value without charity, and all things are of value in Thine eyes when done as a service to Thee.

The love and service of my neighbour is the love and service of Thee.

Instr. 30. Make me bear patiently whatever others do to me.

May I never rebel, by whomsoever my patience is tried.

Be the man good or bad, worthy or perverse, a superior, an equal, or an inferior, I believe that it is Thy hand which strikes me in order to heal me.

Teach me how to go beyond all trials direct to Thee, and never to fasten my attention upon the trials themselves.

(C) Forgiveness.

3. Deinde non occidere.	3. Then not to kill.
5. Non facere furtum.	5. Not to steal.
9. Et quod sibi quis fieri non vult, alii non faciat.	9. Not to do to another what one would not have done to oneself.
22. Iram non perficere.	22. Not to give way to anger.
23. Iracundiæ tempus non reservare.	23. Not to harbour a desire of revenge.
24. Dolum in corde non tenere.	24. Not to foster guile in one's heart.
25. Pacem falsam non dare.	25. Not to make a feigned peace.
26. Caritatem non derelinquere.	26. Not to forsake charity.
28. Veritatem ex corde et ore proferre.	28. To utter truth from heart and mouth.
29. Malum pro malo non reddere.	29. Not to render evil for evil.
31. Inimicos diligere.	31. To love one's enemies.
32. Maledicentes se non remaledicere sed magis benedicere.	32. Not to render cursing for cursing, but rather blessing.
64. Nullum odire.	64. To hate no man.
70. In Christi amore pro inimicis orare.	70. To pray for one's enemies in the love of Christ.
71. Cum discordante ante solis occasum in pacem redire.	71. To make peace with an adversary before the setting of the sun.

Thoughts.

These instruments are necessary for community life. They contain the Gospel teaching of forgiveness.

"To give way to anger" is to allow it to gain possession of the heart. The Law is clear: "You must forgive from your heart."

A religious must not be content with hiding anger and dislike, but he must banish them. A feigned peace is as bad as no peace. Anger, hate, revenge, deceit, must be excluded from the monastery, and we must love our enemies, pray that God's grace may soften their enmity, and heap blessings on them in return for curses. In every heart must reign the peace and love of Christ.

Prayer.

"If we love one another, God abideth in us, and His charity is perfected in us" (1 John iv. 12).

"If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar" (1 John iv. 20).

These are the words of Thy beloved disciple.

He learned the law of love from Thy own Sacred Heart.

Fill our hearts with Thy love.

All things in no way profit us, unless we have charity.

Make me patient, kind, forgiving.

Thou hast commanded, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Teach us how to bear one another's burdens, so that we may fulfil the law of Christ.

May the multitude of Thy children have but one heart, one soul, and all things in common—their sorrows, their burdens, and their joys.

GROUP IV.—FOUR LAST THINGS.

44. Diem judicii timere.
45. Gehennam expavescere.
46. Vitam æternam omni concupiscentia spirituali desiderare.
47. Mortem quotidie ante oculos suspectam habere.
41. Spem suam Deo committere.
72. Et de Dei misericordia nunquam desperare.

44. To fear the day of judgment.
45. To be in dread of hell.
46. To desire with all spiritual longing everlasting life.
47. To keep death daily before one's eyes.
41. To put one's hope in God.
72. And never to despair of God's mercy.

Thoughts.

We must not forget the majesty and omnipotence of God because we love to dwell on the humility and love of Jesus Christ. Our love of God must be founded on the fear of God, or else when the storms rage and the floods come out the house we have built will fall, for it was built on sand. The thought of death, judgment, and hell constantly remembered will make us feel that we *dare not* desert God, however great the counter-attraction may be for us during the time of temptation.

Moreover, humble reverence is the only true attitude for a creature before God. "Tremunt potestates": we read that the powers tremble before God's majesty, and bow low in adoration. It must, then, be a wrong attitude for a man to stand up with self-assurance and independence in the presence of God.

Those who eagerly desire to win heaven have much to fear. They must fear to be unfaithful to God, fear their frailty and fickleness, fear the strength of their enemies, fear the withdrawal of God's grace,

and, above all, fear the "day of the Lord"—the day of reckoning, the day in which His majesty and omnipotence will assert themselves against His rebellious creatures. The more a soul desires to gain heaven, the more will it cling to God and fear to be dragged from Him. It will not dare to rely on its own strength, but will ever hope for the sustaining Hand of God. It is persuaded that nothing is possible to it without God's help, and all things with it: "I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me." The fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom is, then, a fear of the results of unfaithfulness to God, and one which persuades a man that he cannot and must not rest upon his own efforts, but upon the strength of God. Therefore it is a fear which strengthens rather than lessens confidence in God.

Prayer.

"Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt serve Him only" (Deut. vi. 13).

Help my weakness. Make me serve Thee, O God, in fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Let me ever remember the account I must render to Thee at the judgment day.

May I fear lest my immortal soul be cast from Thee into hell.

Give me the grace of an ever-abiding remembrance of my death.

Fill me with the desire of joining Thy Saints in heaven, and of living for ever with Thee.

Make me ever cling to Thy Commandments.

Never let me be separated from Thee.

I have many enemies without and within my soul.

I must work out my salvation with fear and trembling.

"Blessed is the man to whom it is given to have the fear of God" (Eccles. xxv. 15).

This fear will make me pray to Thee for help, and depend on Thee and not on myself.

Then Thou wilt help me and save me.

"Who is this that cometh up from the desert, leaning upon her beloved?" (Cant. viii. 5).

It is the soul which rests upon the strength of Jesus during the desert-journey of life.

Thou art my beloved! Thou dost love me, and I can have every confidence in Thy love.

Thou wilt help me and save me if I put my trust in Thee—"Sperate in Domino!" "Those that hope in the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall take wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary" (Isa. xl. 31).

NOTE.—The Instruments 7, 27, 40, 52, 53, 54, 55, will be considered in Chapter VI.

Instruments 1 and 2 are a summary of all the spiritual life. The Instruments of Good Works given to us by St. Benedict will help us to increase in the love of God and of men.

CHAPTER V

OF THE OBEDIENCE OF THE BRETHREN

Text.

Primus humilitatis gradus est obedientia sine mora. Hæc convenit his, qui nihil sibi Christo carius existimant, propter sanctum servitium quod professi sunt, seu, propter metum gehennæ, vel gloriam vitæ æternæ; et mox, ut aliquid imperatum a majore fuerit, ac si divinitus imperetur, moram pati nesciunt in faciendo. De quibus Dominus dicit: "*In auditu auris obedivit mihi.*" Et item dicet Doctoribus: "*Qui vos audit, me audit.*"

The first degree of humility is obedience without delay. This becometh those who hold nothing dearer to them than Christ, and who on account of the holy servitude which they have taken upon them, either for fear of hell or for the glory of life everlasting, as soon as anything is ordered by a Superior, suffer no more delay in doing it than if it had been commanded by God Himself. It is of these that the Lord saith: "At the hearing of the ear he hath obeyed Me." And, again, to the teachers He saith: "He that heareth you heareth Me."

Thoughts.

A.

"I think that the sum of the whole Rule of St. Benedict is contained in the one exercise of Obedience; and as he, by the favour of the Divine Grace, saw the whole world in one ray of the sun, so his disciple may see the whole extent of the Rule contracted under that one word, Obedience" (Haeften).

Every Order has its characteristic virtue. One is known for its spirit of penance, another for its poverty; but the virtue especially characteristic of the Benedictine is obedience.

"*The first degree of humility is obedience without delay.*" In Chapter VII. St. Benedict sets down the "Fear of God" as the first degree of humility, and gives obedience as the third degree. This, however, is no contradiction. In Chapter VII. the rise and progress of humility are given, and therefore the "Fear of God" is put down as the first degree or start. In this chapter, St. Benedict speaks of obedience as the first manifestation or result of humility. Obedience such as St. Benedict requires is certainly the first, the most excellent and most comprehensive degree of humility. To obey without delay, cheerfully, exactly, and with true inward submission of judgment and will, requires solid humility. As St. Theresa says: "Where pride is there can never be true obedience. A man is humble in proportion as he is obedient, and he is obedient in proportion as he is humble."

"Hæc convenit his qui nihil sibi Christo carius existimant"—"*This becometh those who hold nothing dearer to them than Christ.*" Prompt obedience is to be expected from those who say they hold Christ as dearer than all to them. For there are many enemies to the supremacy of Christ, external foes and internal traitors, our weak and wavering wills and our strong passions. These enemies must be overcome before Christ can hold the chief place in anyone's life. Bodily mortification

is, therefore, essential in the spiritual life, but still more necessary is the mortification which brings the intellect and will into subjection to Christ. Just as the body, unless tamed, gets out of hand and leads men to sensual gratification, so the soul has its own evil tendency to self-gratification. There is a concupiscence of the spirit as there is of the body. The most common form of it is the desire to do what one wills, to throw off any restraint or authority and to assert oneself against others. These inclinations, if unchecked, will lead a man not only proudly to assert himself against his companions and Superiors, but to throw off the yoke of his Creator, and gradually to give utterance in his life to that supreme act of pride, "I will not serve!" The mortification which most directly attacks this concupiscence of the soul is true interior obedience.

Prayer.

Nihil sibi Christo carius existimant.

There is nothing so pleasing to me as Thou art, O Jesus!

Thou art dearer to me than all else.

Thou art my King. Rule me, body and soul.

"It is like the sin of witchcraft to rebel, and like the crime of idolatry to refuse to obey!" (1 Kings xv. 23).

Thou alone shalt rule in my soul.

Rebel thoughts and usurping desires shall be slain by the sword of obedience.

Before Thou canst reign within me, Thy enemy "self" must be conquered.

I will attack it in its stronghold, that rebellious proud will of mine.

Help me to do Thy will and not my own.

Obedientia sine mora.

I have said in the past, "I will not serve."

Let me atone for this rebellious pride by humble obedience to Thee in all things.

May I love to submit my judgment and will.

May I seize every opportunity of conquering them.

If the command is hard, teach me to mortify my will cheerfully.

If the command is unwise in my eyes, teach me to mortify my judgment.

May each command be obeyed exactly.

"Obedience is better than sacrifice" in Thy eyes.

In a sacrifice another victim is offered to Thee; by obedience Thou receivest the sacrifice of myself, of my body and my soul with its powers.

Rule me, then; subdue me! Thou art the Christ, the Anointed King of my soul. May Thy kingdom come!

B.

"And who on account of the holy servitude which they have taken upon them either for fear of hell or for the glory of life everlasting, as soon as anything is ordered by the Superior, suffer no more delay in doing it than if it had been commanded by God Himself." The obedience we take upon ourselves is not servile, but *holy—i.e.*, based on the highest motives, the personal service of Christ—"cui servire regnare est." We wish Christ to be supreme and to

conquer our self-will. We want to take practical means to accomplish this. We therefore put Superiors in the place of Christ; their voice is the voice of Christ, and we promise obedience to everything which they command or forbid according to the Rules of the Order. We must not consider the personality of the Superior, obeying well if we like him and disobeying if we dislike him, because that would not be an obedience based upon religious principles at all, but on personal likes and dislikes, or, in other words, would be an exhibition of self-will—the very enemy we meant to attack when we took up the weapon of obedience.

The motive of the fear of hell, of course, does not imply that all disobedience is a mortal sin; but it implies that a man dreads that loss of grace and gradual descent into mortal sin caused by frequent venial sins, and that he seeks that power of self-control which obedience gives him, and which is the great safeguard against mortal sin.

Prayer.

Propter sanctum servitium.

"Domine, ego servus tuus, et filius ancillæ tuæ."

This servitude ennobles me, sanctifies me, strengthens me.

It is better to be a servant in Thy House than to dwell in the tents of sinners.

This is a false freedom—a freedom which enslaves, a freedom which degrades, a freedom which leads to hell.

Propter metum gehennæ.

Let me fear such freedom as this. My intellect, my will, my body, all conspire to enslave me. They will cause the loss of my soul, unless I conquer them.

I will accept every opportunity of subduing their pride.

Day by day, hour by hour, I determine to live by obedience.

When my body is slothful, I will use the sharp weapon Thou hast put into my hands.

Whenever my mind and my will rebel, I will subject them to Thee.

Ac si divinitus imperetur.

For it is Thy voice I hear when my Superior speaks.

It is Thy command which I obey when I force myself to keep my Rule strictly.

"In auditu auris, obedivit *Mihi*" (Ps. xvii. 45).

"Qui vos audit, *Me* audit" (Luc. x. 16).

Let me remember Thy words when my Superior or his commands are trying to me.

"Tanto plus proficiet in virtutibus, et sapientior erit, quanto humilius superioribus se submittet" (Thomas à Kempis, "In dialog. Novit.," C. 2).

The more completely I submit to Thy vicegerent, the more quickly shall I advance in virtue; the more wise shall I be in my understanding of the reasons for adopting this holy servitude.

May I force myself to serve Thee faithfully now, and ever encourage myself by the thought of the "glory of life everlasting," which is the reward for faithful service.

Gloriam vitæ æternæ.

"Inclinavi cor meum ad faciendas

justificationes tuas in æternum, propter retributionem" (Ps. cxviii.).

Text.

Ergo hi tales relinquentes statim quæ sua sunt, et voluntatem propriam deserentes, mox exoccupatis manibus, et quod agebant imperfectum relinquentes, vicino obedientiæ pede, jubentis vocem factis sequuntur; et veluti uno momento prædicta Magistri jussio, et perfecta discipuli opera, in velocitate timoris Dei, ambæ res communiter citius explicantur, quibus ad vitam æternam gradiendi amor incumbit. Ideo angustam viam arripiunt; unde Dominus dicit: "*Angusta via est, quæ ducit ad vitam*"; ut non suo arbitrio viventes, vel desideriis suis, et voluptatibus obedientes, sed ambulantes alieno judicio et imperio, in cœnobiis degentes, abbatem sibi præesse desiderant. Sine dubio hi tales illam Domini sententiam imitantur, qua dicit: "*Non veni facere voluntatem meam, sed ejus qui misit me.*"

Such as these, therefore, leaving immediately their own occupations and forsaking their own will, with their hands disengaged, and leaving unfinished what they were about, with the speedy step of obedience, follow by their deeds the voice of him who commands; and so, as it were, at the same instant the bidding of the Master and the perfect fulfilment of the disciple are joined together in the swiftness of the fear of God by those who are moved with the desire of attaining eternal life. These, therefore, choose the narrow way, of which the Lord saith: "Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life"; so that, living not by their own will, nor obeying their own desires and pleasures, but walking according to the direction and command of another, and dwelling in community, they desire to have an Abbot over them. Such as these, without doubt, fulfil that saying of the Lord: "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him Who sent me."

Thoughts.

St. Thomas teaches that there are three elements which constitute an act of obedience:

(*a*) The material accomplishment of what is commanded.

(*b*) The will with which it is executed.

(*c*) The judgment which approves of it.

In this passage St. Benedict insists upon these three qualities of obedience:

(*a*) "With hands disengaged . . . with the speedy foot of obedience, they follow by their deeds the voice of him who commands."

(*b*) "Forsaking their own will"; "not obeying their own desires and pleasures."

(*c*) "Not living by their own judgment . . . but walking according to the direction and command of another."

The obedience of the will does not mean that we must never feel pain or repugnance. These are beyond our wills, and if we act against them firmly we increase the merit of our obedience. We must learn to love every command, not because it is agreeable to us or because we like the Superior who imposes it, but because it offers us the opportunity of performing an act of obedience. The harder the command and the more repugnance we feel to it, the more should we value it as a salutary mortification. St. John Climacus calls obedience "the tomb of our will, wherein it lies dead and from which humility rises again."

The obedience of the judgment does not bind us to think that the Superior is infallible, and that all his actions are prudent. It rather means that we will not allow ourselves to pass judgment upon the orders of Superiors, because we have accepted them as God's representatives. It is God's voice we hear in the commands of a Superior. If the orders do not appeal to us, then we have an opportunity of

humbling ourselves and of weakening the power of self-will over us.

Prayer.

Angustam viam arripiunt.

"Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life" (Matt. vii. 14).

This narrow way is the way of self-surrender.

May Thy voice command and direct me at every hour.

Voluntatem propriam deserentes.

May I recognize it when it calls me from one duty to another.

May I train myself to submit to Thee by prompt obedience.

Exoccupatis manibus.

I must leave unfinished what I am doing when Thy summons is heard.

Quod agebant imperfectum relinquentes.

With promptitude and exactness must I carry out the bidding of my Master.

Make me a perfect disciple.

In velocitate timoris Dei. Vitæ æternæ amor.

The fear of Thy presence shall restrain me, and the hope of Thy rewards shall encourage me.

"I have not come to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me" (John v. 30).

Give me a clear understanding of this.

Abbatem sibi præesse desiderant.

May I fear to do my own will. Let me oppose it at every turn, and accept anything which weakens its hold upon me.

I must *desire* to be under a Superior.

Ambulantes alieno judicio et imperio.

I must feel that I am not in a safe way unless I am walking by the guidance and direction of another.

How blind and unspiritual I have been!

I have grown accustomed to the ordinary routine, and my want of spirituality is clear when anything unaccustomed happens to me.

How sensitive I am when the correction is *sharp!*

How self-willed when my Superior restrains me!

How obstinate in clinging to my own views!

How many times have I obeyed like a slave, without inward submission as to God!

I have cherished resentment, hugged my grievances, and criticized.

In short, I have not remembered that my only object in taking up the weapons of obedience was to conquer myself, to mortify my spirit, and to submit myself wholly to Thee.

Help me for the future to be truly obedient, subduing both my body and soul.

Angusta via est, quæ ducit ad vitam.

When this is hard, let me remember that I have chosen the narrow way, and encourage myself by the reflection that it is "the way which leadeth unto life."

QUALITIES OF OBEDIENCE.

Text.

Sed hæc ipsa obedientia tunc acceptabilis erit Deo, et dulcis hominibus, si quod jubetur, non trepide, non tarde, non tepide, aut cum murmure, vel cum responso nolentis efficiatur; quia obedientia, quæ majoribus præbetur, Deo exhibetur. Ipse enim dixit: "*Qui vos audit, Me audit.*"

But this very obedience will then only be acceptable to God and sweet to men if what is commanded be done not fearfully, tardily, nor coldly, nor with murmuring, nor with an answer showing unwillingness; for the obedience which is given to Superiors is given to God,

Et cum bono animo a discipulis præberi oportet, quia: "*Hilarem datorem diligit Deus.*" Nam cum malo animo si obedit discipulus, et non solum ore, sed etiam corde si murmuraverit; etsi impleat jussionem, tamen acceptus jam non erit Deo, qui cor respicit murmurantis; et pro tali facto nullam consequitur gratiam; imo murmurantium pœnam incurrit, si non cum satisfactione emendaverit.

since He Himself hath said: "He that heareth you, heareth Me." And it ought to be given by disciples with a good will, because "God loveth a cheerful giver." For if the disciple obey with ill-will, and murmur not only with his lips, but even in his heart, although he fulfil the command, yet it will not be accepted by God, Who regardeth the heart of the murmurer. And for such an action he shall gain no reward—nay, rather, he shall incur the punishment due to murmurers, unless he amend and make satisfaction.

Thoughts.

1. *Not Fearfully—i.e.*, not afraid of what is hard.

We are soldiers of Christ, and He has armed us with the weapon of obedience. We are poor soldiers if we run away before difficulties. We must not fear what is difficult and unpleasant, and be ready to bear responsibility.

2. *Not Tardily.*—St. Benedict has spoken strongly and clearly already in this chapter about promptness in obeying. When a religious obeys *immediately*, he evidently recognizes God's voice, and is anxious to give up his own will and to do the Will of God. A habit of prompt obedience will help very much to keep our obedience supernatural.

"When the diligent student of sacred Scripture or the diligent transcriber of books, on being summoned, closes his book and lays down his pen, and, at the sound of the bell, rises and goes to choir or hastens without delay to some common duty of the community, then, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, new

flowers begin to bloom in the garden of his heart and the fruits of obedience to appear and come to their full perfection and glory. These will be ranked as his greatest merits and the most beautiful ornaments of his crown" (Thomas à Kempis, Serm. 16, ad Novit.).

3. *Not Coldly.*—We must do everything for God with all our heart and soul. Our service must not be sluggish and half-hearted. We must be *exact* in doing what we are told, and at the time we are told. To be slovenly and inexact is to be weak in principle. Obedience is for the destruction, and not for the fostering of self-will, and hence we must be anxious to do exactly as we are told.

4. *Without Grumbling.*—St. Benedict condemns grumbling strongly. Our obedience is to God, and therefore should be cheerful. A religious takes up obedience to overcome his own will. It is unreasonable, then, for him to murmur when his will is thwarted.

Prayer.

My obedience to Thee must have certain qualities.

It must be brave, prompt, fervent, cheerful.

Such obedience will please Thee, and console and encourage my Superior who holds Thy place.

Non trepide. I must not be a coward, afraid of what is hard.

I am Thy soldier, and must be ready to fight.

I am Thy servant, and the work is for Thee.

I must not, then, seek my own pleasure in it.

I must not shirk what is difficult and unpleasant.

Non tarde. I must not obey slowly and reluctantly, because it is Thy voice which speaks to me.

My object in the monastic life is to give up my own will and pleasure to Thee.

Non tepide. I must do everything for Thee, and not for myself.

I will, therefore, throw my heart and soul into every obedience.

I will be *exact* and self-sacrificing.

"Tepidity! how I hate you!" (Fr. Baker).

Aut cum murmurio. Murmuring, my Master, would be rebellion against Thee.

It would be hypocrisy: a pretence of fidelity, and yet rebellion against Thee.

To grumble is to assert self-will, which I wished to overcome by obedience.

My obedience to Thee shall have these qualities.

The harder an obedience is, the more completely am I serving Thee.

I will *gladly* surrender myself to Thee wholly.

"Hilarem datorem diligit Deus."

I will try to be quite *unselfish* in my service of Thee.

Summary of St. Benedict's Teaching on Obedience.

1. Obedience is a branch of humility, and the most important one, for it attacks directly the chief source of pride—viz., our natural love of independence, liberty, desire of rule, etc.

2. Our obedience is given not so much to the

earthly Superior as to Christ, Whom he represents. It is an act of personal devotion to Christ.

3. Hence in our obedience we must not think of our personal liking or disliking for the Superior, but of Christ Who speaks through him.

4. Hence we must obey promptly, cheerfully, exactly as if Christ Himself had commanded us in person.

5. We take up a life of obedience to conquer our own will. Hence to obey outwardly and not inwardly, or grudgingly and half-heartedly, is a folly and a contradiction, for then we indulge our own will.

6. To criticize a command is to indulge self-will, for we withhold inward submission altogether, or till we have pronounced judgment on the Superior.

7. Obedience is freedom, not slavery, for it makes our will free to love God alone. It exalts rather than abases us, for it directs our love to the grandest of all objects—viz., Jesus Christ.

When an obvious mistake has been made by a Superior, "patient and opportune" representation is not against obedience. If the Superior persists, we must not only obey, but refuse to pass sentence, and think, "This is the right and *best* thing for me now, since obedience has put it upon me."

CHAPTER VI

OF SILENCE

Text.

Faciamus quod ait Propheta: "*Dixi, Custodiam vias meas, ut non delinquam in lingua mea: posui ori meo custodiam: obmutui, et humiliatus sum, et silui a bonis.*" Hic ostendit Propheta, si bonis eloquiis interdum propter taciturnitatem debet tacere, quanto magis a malis verbis propter pœnam peccati debet cessari? Ergo, quamvis de bonis et sanctis ad ædificationem eloquiis, perfectis discipulis, propter taciturnitatis gravitatem, rara loquendi concedatur licentia, quia scriptum est: "*In multiloquio non effugies peccatum*": et alibi: "*Mors et vita in manibus linguæ.*" Nam loqui et docere magistrum condecet: tacere, et audire discipulo convenit.

Let us do as saith the prophet: "I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I have placed a watch over my mouth; I became dumb and was silent, and held my peace even from good things." Here the prophet sheweth that if we ought at times to refrain even from good words for the sake of silence, how much more ought we to abstain from evil words, on account of the punishment due to sin. Therefore, on account of the importance of silence, let leave to speak be seldom granted even to perfect disciples, although their conversation be good and holy and tending to edification; because it is written: "In much speaking thou shalt not avoid sin." And elsewhere: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." For it becometh the master to speak and to teach, but it beseemeth the disciple to be silent and to listen.

Et ideo, si quæ requirenda sunt a Priore, cum omni humilitate et subjectione reverentiæ requirantur. Scurrili tates vero

And therefore, if anything has to be asked of the Superior, let it be done with all humility and subjection of reverence. But as for buffoonery or idle words,

vel verba otiosa et risum moventia, æterna clausura in omnibus locis damnamus, et ad tale eloquium discipulum aperire os non permittimus.

such as move to laughter, we utterly condemn them in every place, nor do we allow the disciple to open his mouth in such discourse.

Thoughts.

ST. BENEDICT'S teaching on silence is very strict. Permission to speak must rarely be given even to perfect disciples. They must refrain from even good words, "propter taciturnitatis gravitatem"—"on account of the importance of silence." He appeals to two texts of Scripture in proof of this:

(*a*) "In much speaking thou shalt not avoid sin . . ."; and

(*b*) "Death and life are in the power of the tongue."

I.—SILENCE HELPS US TO AVOID SIN.

(*a*) "In much speaking thou shalt not avoid sin."

St. John Chrysostom teaches the same; he writes:

"In much speaking of any kind, though it be pious or holy and necessary, sin cannot be avoided, for it is impossible for a frail man, if he speaks often and for a long time, to keep that guard over his speech which is required."

Much talking is opposed to much thinking, and much thinking is necessary if we wish the supernatural to rule and control the feelings and emotions of the moment. Much talking leads inevitably to uncharitable words, to grumbling and criticism, to display and self-assertion, and to the utterance of false or faulty principles.

It injures him who talks and him who listens.

It lowers the standard of observance and ruins charity.

"By it the spiritual life of the monastery is brought to nought and charity is ruined" (St. Bernard).

Much talking means, also, much waste of time.

St. Bernard says:

"How true, my brethren, is the sentence, 'In much speaking thou shalt not escape sin'! Passing by other matters . . . let none of our brethren value the time lightly which is wasted by idle speech. If, indeed, this is the acceptable time and the day of salvation, the word that flies from the mouth is irrevocable, the time that is lost is irreparable, nor does the foolish man know what he is losing. 'We may talk,' he says, 'for a whole hour!' Oh, for a whole hour! during the passing away of an hour! Whilst the time is slipping away, whilst the hour passes which the kind Creator has lovingly given to you in which to do penance for your sins, to obtain pardon for them, to acquire grace, and to merit glory!"

Prayer.

Posui ori meo custodiam. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man" (Jas. iii. 2).

I will take care, O Lord, that I sin not with my tongue.

I will set a good guard over my mouth.

Thou wast silent and opened not Thy mouth when men reviled Thee, and falsely accused Thee, and condemned Thee to death.

I will be dumb and humble, remembering Thy example, forgetting myself, and enduring all things for love of Thee.

A malis verbis. No uncharitable word shall pass my lips; no words of anger or resentment shall ever be uttered by me again.

Teach me to refrain from speaking of Thy gifts to me.

Audire discipulo convenit. Remove from me all pride. May I love to learn rather than to teach.

"O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips and from a deceitful tongue." What protection have I against my deceitful tongue? O Thou Mighty One, slay my enemy with Thy sharp arrows.

Ps. cxix. Make desolate its country with destroying coals of fire.

When this my enemy is subdued, then shall I be Thy perfect servant.

I cannot both speak well and speak much.

A wise man speaks little because he fears to speak ill.

When I do speak, I will try to be charitable, sincere, simple, and humble.

II.—Silence helps us both to Avoid Sin and to Grow in Virtue.

(*b*) "Death and Life are in the power of the tongue."

A religious who loves much talking will lose the habit of recollection, of guard over his heart, and the sense of God's presence, and will become the

slave of impulse. He will become permanently tepid, and an easy prey to the Devil.

"The tongue," says St. Bernard, "is a small member, but, unless you are careful, it is the cause of much evil.

"It is thin and broad—a most fit instrument for emptying the heart. As the consciences of many of you will, I think, bear me witness, if, after much talking, the mind finds itself to a certain degree empty, and our meditation is no longer devout, and the spring of affections has run dry, and the holocaust of prayer is not so rich, words are certainly the cause, whether words we have spoken or those we have listened to."

"It is no small loss to lose the grace of devotion by much speaking" (Thomas à Kempis, Serm. 19, ad Novit.).

On the other hand, silence is the atmosphere in which the spiritual life thrives and waxes strong.

"By keeping silence well, you preserve also obedience, you safeguard humility, you add a charm to modesty, you show reverence to the elders, and are an example to those beneath you; the frivolous and dissipated are checked, and you increase the good name of your monastery amongst men, and are the source of peace and concord amongst the brethren" (Thomas à Kempis).

"Still-born Silence! thou that art
Floodgate of the deeper heart!
Offspring of a heavenly kind!
Frost o' the mouth and thaw o' the mind!

* * * * *

With thy enthusiasms come,
Seize our tongues and strike us dumb!"
Richard Fleckno, 1653 (quoted by Lamb).

Prayer.

"He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his soul; but he that hath no guard on his speech shall meet with evils" (Prov. xiii. 3).

Silence produces prayer, and prayer produces silence.

"Since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant, O Lord, I have more impediment and slowness of tongue" (Exod. iv. 10).

Draw me to Thyself. Speak to me. Enshrine Thyself in my heart. Teach me to live in Thy presence.

"It is good, O Lord, to wait in silence for Thy salvation. It is good for me to have borne Thy yoke from my youth; I have taken it upon myself, and will sit solitary and hold my peace" (Jer., Lam. iii.).

In silence will Thy voice be heard.

Let all voices be hushed.

I have but one desire, one hope, one happiness.

In silence shall I work for Thee; in silence shall I think of Thee, pray to Thee, and ever love Thee more.

Silence will make me humble, obedient, mortified, and prayerful.

Too much talking will open the flood-gates of my heart, and I shall lose all that I have stored.

I shall become frivolous, dissipated, unhappy, and unkind.

Thy yoke will be heavy, because I shall not have Thy help.

Death and life depend upon the control of the tongue.

III.—Faults to be Avoided in Talking.

A master is bound to talk to give instructions to those under him. He must fear this necessity, as it places him in danger, and he must take special means to safeguard himself.

A disciple has to listen, to submit his views, and to be eager to learn. In his dealings with his Superior he must be humble, submissive, and reverent.

Pride of judgment and independence of will are opposed to the religious spirit. Because they are immature and inexperienced, the young are inclined to be viewy, critical, and restless under restraint. They must try to acquire the humble, reverent spirit of St. Benedict.

There are three classes of talk which are strongly condemned and forbidden:

(*a*) *Scurrilous Words.*—A *scurra* was a coarse jester. Any vulgar or indecent talk is quite unworthy of the religious character.

(*b*) *Idle words.*

(*c*) *Words moving to laughter.*

These do not forbid the cheerfulness which is so great a help in community life, but rather the spirit of levity, buffoonery, and idleness. "If you cannot endure solitude and silence, but find your delight in

idle words and immoderate laughter, you are no monk" ("Mirror for Monks"). Such a spirit would quickly destroy reverence for Superiors and for one another; the outward forms of courtesy and self-restraint ordered by St. Benedict would be neglected and scoffed at, and in their place would reign vulgarity, slovenliness, and disobedience. No self-respecting and observant community would tolerate such abuses.

Prayer.

Give me, O Lord, an appreciation of the virtue of silence.

May I love rather to listen than to speak; to be guided than to lead; to be subject than to rule.

Cum omni humilitate et subjectione reverentiæ.

Make me humble, reverent, and submissive.

Save me from a foolish and wicked tongue.

"If any man think himself to be religious, not bridling his tongue, this man's religion is vain" (Jas. i. 26).

"Let every man be quick to hear and slow to speak" (Jas. i. 19).

"Where there are many words there is oftentimes want" (Prov. xiv. 23).

"The heart of fools is in their mouth, and the mouth of the wise is in their heart" (Ecclus. xxi. 29).

I must render an account to Thee, my Judge, for every idle word that comes from my lips.

May I love solitude and silence.

CENTRAL COLLECTION

Teach me self-restraint both of soul and of body.

Teach me how to be bright and cheerful without losing my seriousness and the remembrance of Thy presence.

Holy Father St. Benedict, pray for thy disciple, that I may become a man of interior life and of prudence in speech.

"By thy words," says our Lord, "thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. xii. 37).

CHAPTER VII

OF HUMILITY

Analysis of the Chapter

Any kind of self-exaltation is unlawful and part of the deadly vice of pride. It degrades us and starves us by robbing us of the nourishment of God's grace. It is only when we regard ourselves as nothing and of no value that we have mastered the virtue of humility. We must look upon humility as a ladder leading to heaven (like the ladder which Jacob saw in a vision), to be mounted slowly and painfully step by step. We must, however, remember that we go up by going down—*i.e.*, by descending lower and lower in our own opinion. To mount higher in our own opinion is not an ascent of this ladder, but a descent. The *whole* man must be humbled; therefore, as we consist of soul and body, humility must be practised both in soul and body.

I.—The Steps of Humility of Soul.

First Step.—To check all *sinful* desires, moved by the fear of God and the sense of His presence.

Second Step.—Not to content ourselves with checking directly sinful desires, but in order to do so more

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efficiently, to control and check *all* desires, even lawful ones, except the desire of God and of virtue. Pride, like every other vice, arises from want of self-control in what is pleasing to flesh and blood.

Third Step.—In order to control our desires more efficiently, to give up to another our very *faculty of desire*—viz., *our will.*

Fourth Step.—To carry out this self-surrender to its full logical conclusion by patiently and gladly enduring a Superior who is harsh and even unfair. It is just then that our obedience is really useful—*i.e.*, when it really checks and thwarts our natural desires.

Fifth Step.—To make this self-surrender even more complete, by revealing our defects even of thought to our Superior, in order to receive guidance and correction from him.

Sixth Step.—To go further still by submitting to harsh treatment, not merely from motives of *duty*, but because we feel we really deserve it as being faithless and unworthy servants.

Seventh Step.—To look on ourselves not merely as unworthy, but as the most unworthy in the whole community.

This is the perfection of inward humility.

II.—Outward Humility, or Humility of the Body.

Eighth Step.—Not to put ourselves forward by following out a line of our own, but, shunning singularity, to follow on the beaten track of the Rule and of the traditions of the monastery.

Ninth Step.—Not simply to refrain from putting ourselves forward, but positively to keep in the background, by refraining from obtruding our own opinions, by loving silence, and by not speaking till spoken to.

Tenth and Eleventh Steps.—Even when we have to talk, doing so with gravity and self-restraint, without loud laughter, humbly, reasonably, and with as few words as possible.

Twelfth Step.—To show forth humility not only by restraint in action, but in our whole appearance, gait, and carriage; with the downcast demeanour of the man who feels he merits God's awful judgment for his many sins, ever saying to ourselves like the publican, "Lord, I, a sinner, am not worthy to raise mine eyes to heaven."

As these steps are mounted, all will become easy and delightful, for Divine charity will cast out fear, and habit will become a second nature.

Short Analysis.

1. Compunction of heart; fear of God and His judgments; recollection of the Divine Presence.
2. To deny our own will.
3. To obey, for the love of God, those who are placed over us.
4. To bear sufferings and injuries patiently.
5. To confess our temptations and sins to our Director.
6. To be contented under every humiliation, and to think oneself unfit for any good undertaking.

7. To be persuaded that we are inferior to everyone.

8. To avoid singularity in our words and actions.

9. To love and practise silence

10. To shun immoderate mirth.

11. To speak gently, quietly, humbly, gravely, with few and reasonable words.

12. To comport ourselves exteriorly as poor sinners convinced of our unworthiness.

Text.

Clamat nobis Scriptura divina, fratres, dicens: "*Omnis, qui se exaltat, humiliabitur, et qui se humiliat, exaltabitur.*" Cum hæc ergo dicit, ostendit omnem exaltationem genus esse superbiæ: quod se cavere Propheta indicat, dicens: "*Domine, non est exaltatum cor meum, neque elati sunt oculi mei; neque ambulavi in magnis, neque in mirabilibus super me.*" Sed quid? "*Si non humiliter sentiebam, sed exaltavi animam meam; sicut ablactatus super matre sua, ita retributio in anima mea.*"

The Holy Scripture crieth out to us, brethren, saying: "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted." In saying this, it teacheth us that all exaltation is a kind of pride, against which the prophet sheweth himself to be on his guard when he saith: "Lord, my heart is not exalted, nor mine eyes lifted up; nor have I walked in great things, nor in wonders above me." For why? "If I did not think humbly, but exalted my soul, like a child that is weaned from its mother, so wilt Thou requite my soul."

Unde, fratres, si summæ humilitatis volumus culmen attingere, et ad exaltationem illam cœlestem, ad quam per præsentis vitæ humilitatem ascenditur, volumus velociter pervenire: actibus nostris ascendentibus, scala erigenda est, quæ in somno Jacob apparuit, per quam et descendentes et ascendentes Angeli monstrabantur. Non aliud sine

Whence, brethren, if we wish to arrive at the highest point of humility, and speedily to reach that heavenly exaltation to which we can only ascend by the humility of this present life, we must by our ever-ascending actions erect such a ladder as that which Jacob beheld in his dream, by which the angels appeared to him

dubio descensus ille et ascensus a nobis intelligitur; nisi exaltatione descendere, et humilitate ascendere.

Scala vero ipsa erecta, nostra est vita in sæculo, quæ humiliato corde a Domino erigitur ad cœlum. Latera enim hujus scalæ dicimus nostrum esse corpus et animam, in quibus lateribus diversos gradus humilitatis, vel disciplinæ, vocatio divina ascendendos inseruit.

descending and ascending. This descent and ascent signifieth nothing else than that we descend by self-exaltation, and ascend by humility.

And the ladder thus erected is our life in the world, which, if the heart be humbled, is lifted up by the Lord to heaven. The sides of the same ladder we understand to be our body and soul, in which our divine vocation hath placed various degrees of humility or discipline, which we must ascend.

Thoughts.

"The Holy Scripture crieth out to us": these words are a strong appeal to our attention. Every form of self-exaltation is pride, and we are warned to be on our guard. Pride of any kind implies self-sufficiency, and then God requites us by leaving us to ourselves. Jacob's ladder was a favourite image with early spiritual writers to describe the soul's progress to heaven. Humility is a height (*culmen*) which is not easily attainable, and the simile of a ladder reminds us that we must be ready for the labour of a long climb.

The steps do not represent the precise order in which a man should mount to humility, as if external humility were not to be practised till internal humility had been obtained; but they give a logical statement of the growth, first of outward, then of inward humility. When humility rules supreme in the soul, it will influence also the whole outward deportment of a man. The first seven degrees lead

the soul to the perfection of inward humility, while the last five degrees deal with outward humility.

Prayer.

Clamat nobis. Thy voice, O my God, crieth unto me lovingly and earnestly.

May I receive Thy warning reverently. Thou sayest to me: "Every one that exalteth himself shall he humbled, and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Omnem exaltationem genus esse superbiæ. I may exalt my own judgment or give independence to my will, or too much indulgence to my body: Thou teachest me that all this is pride.

Quod se cavere Propheta indicat: "Domine non est exaltatum," etc. May I ever be on my guard against every form of exaltation. I must walk in humility with eyes downcast, for I am a sinner before Thee.

O Lord, my heart with its desires has been exalted; humble it, I beseech Thee.

If I do not think humbly, but exalt my soul,

Sicut ablactatus. Thou wilt desert me. My soul will die of starvation if deprived of Thy help and grace.

Ad exaltationem cœlestem, etc. I can ascend to Thee only by becoming more humble; if I exalt myself, I descend from heaven to earth.

I must be humble both in soul and body.

Latera scalæ. Corpus et animam. Step by step I must mount this heavenly ladder, till self is conquered and Thou dost reign supreme.

It is a hard task to pull self down from its throne in my heart. Help me, O Lord, in this work.

Thou hast regard to the prayers of the humble, and Thou wilt not despise my petition.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like to Thy heart.

I cannot do heroic works for Thee, but I can humble myself. I cannot pray as I ought to pray to Thee, but I can stand before Thee with downcast eyes.

My sins are many and my love of self is strong, but I can remember my sins all the days of my life, and in atonement I can fight against self-love.

I cannot help others as I ought because I am not holy enough, but I can submit to them and pray for them.

"A contrite and humble heart Thou wilt not despise": hear, then, my prayer, and help me to be humble.

First Degree of Humility.

Text.

Primus itaque humilitatis gradus est, si timorem Dei sibi ante oculos semper ponens, oblivionem omnino fugiat, et semper sit memor omnium quæ præcepit Deus, qualiter contemnentes Deum in gehennam pro peccatis incidunt, et vitam æternam, quæ timentibus Deum præparata est, animo suo semper revolvat. Et custodiens se omni hora a peccatis et vitiis, id est cogitationum, linguæ, oculorum, manuum, pedum vel voluntatis

The first degree of humility, then, is that a man always keep the fear of God before his eyes, avoiding all forgetfulness; and that he be ever mindful of all that God hath commanded, bethinking himself that those who despise God will be consumed in hell for their sins, and that life everlasting is prepared for them that fear Him. And keeping himself at all times from sin and vice, whether of the thoughts, the tongue, the hands, the feet,

propriæ, sed et desideria carnis amputare festinet.

Æstimet se homo de cœlis a Deo semper respici omni hora, et facta sua in omni loco ab aspectu Divinitatis videri, et ab Angelis omni hora Deo nunciari. Demonstrat nobis hoc Propheta, cum in cogitationibus nostris ita Deum semper præsentem ostendit, dicens: "*Scrutans corda et renes Deus.*" Et item: "*Dominus novit cogitationes hominum, quoniam vanæ sunt.*" Et item dicit: *Intellexisti cogitationes meas a longe*"; et: "*Quia cogitatio hominis confitebitur tibi.*" Nam ut sollicitus sit circa cogitationes perversas, dicat semper humilis frater in corde suo: "*Tunc ero immaculatus coram eo, si observavero me ab iniquitate mea.*"

Voluntatem vero propriam ita facere prohibemur, quum dicit nobis Scriptura: "*Et a voluntatibus tuis avertere.*" Et item: "*Rogamus Deum in oratione, ut fiat illius voluntas in nobis.*"

Docemur ergo merito nostram non facere voluntatem, quum cavemus illud; quod dicit sancta Scriptura: "*Sunt viæ, quæ videntur hominibus rectæ, quarum finis usque ad profundum inferni demergit.*" Et cum item pavemus illud, quod de negligentibus dictum est: "*Corrupti sunt, et abominabiles facti sunt in voluptatibus suis.*" In desideriis vero carnis nobis Deum credamus esse præsentem semper, quum dicit Propheta Domino: "*Domine, ante te est omne desiderium meum.*"

Cavendum ergo ideo malum

or his own will, let him thus hasten to cut off the desires of the flesh.

Let him consider that he is always beheld from heaven by God, and that his actions are everywhere seen by the eye of the Divine Majesty, and are every hour reported to Him by His angels. This the prophet telleth us when he sheweth how God is ever present in our thoughts, saying: "God searcheth the heart and the reins." And again: "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men that they are vain"; and he also saith: "Thou hast understood my thoughts afar off"; and "The thought of man shall confess to Thee." In order, therefore, that he may be on his guard against evil thoughts, let the humble brother say ever in his heart: "Then shall I be unspotted before Him, if I shall have kept me from mine iniquity."

We are, indeed, forbidden to do our own will by Scripture, which saith to us: "Turn away from thine own will." And so, too, we beg of God in prayer that His will may be done in us.

Rightly, therefore, are we taught not to do our own will, if we take heed to the warning of Scripture: "There are ways which to men seem right, but the ends thereof lead to the depths of hell"; or again, when we tremble at what is said of the careless: "They are corrupt, and have become abominable in their pleasures." And in regard to the desires of the flesh, we must believe that God is always present to us, as the prophet saith to the Lord: "O Lord, all my desire is before Thee."

Let us be on our guard, then,

desiderium, quia mors secus introitum delectationis posita est. Unde Scriptura præcepit, dicens: "*Post concupiscentias tuas non eas.*" Ergo si oculi Domini speculantur bonos et malos, et Dominus de cœlo semper respicit super filios hominum, ut videat si est intelligens, aut requirens Deum; et ab Angelis nobis deputatis quotidie die noctuque Domino factorum nostrorum opera nostra nunciantur: cavendum est ergo omni hora, fratres, sicut in Psalmo dicit Propheta: ne nos declinantes in malum, et inutiles factos, aliqua hora aspiciat Deus, et parcendo nobis in hoc tempore (quia pius est, et expectat nos converti in melius), ne dicat nobis in futuro: "*Hæc fecisti, et tacui.*"

against evil desires, since death hath its seat close to the entrance of delight; wherefore the Scripture commandeth us, saying: "Go not after thy concupiscences." Since, therefore, the eyes of the Lord behold the good and the evil, and the Lord is ever looking down from heaven upon the children of men to see who hath understanding or is seeking God; and since the works of our hands are reported to Him day and night by the angels appointed to watch over us, we must be always on the watch, brethren, lest, as the prophet saith in the psalm, God should see us at any time declining to evil and become unprofitable, and lest, though He spare us now, because He is merciful and expecteth our conversion, He should say to us hereafter: "These things thou didst, and I held My peace."

Thoughts.

Our first step up the ladder of humility is the purification of the soul from sins and vicious inclinations. The motive-power in the heart (grace being presupposed) which makes us wish to commence this ascent, is the fear of God. This fear, as described in the first degree, consists of three elements—the fear of hell, the desire of heaven, and the sense of God's presence and all-seeing penetration.

It produces four results:

(*a*) The remembrance of God's commandments.

(*b*) The avoidance of all sin (in thought, tongue, will, etc.).

(*c*) The rooting up of the very desires of the flesh as the sources of sin—"sed et desideria carnis amputare festinet."

(*d*) The careful custody of our thoughts—"ut sollicitus sit circa cogitationes perversas," "cavendum est omni hora."

However strong our love of God may have grown, there will come times when it will need the support of the fear of God.

As the love of God increases in us and becomes the motive-power of our actions, the fear of God will remain in abeyance; but it must never be lost. We must "fly all forgetfulness." The absence of this fear would do much to destroy that humility which dreads its own weakness and which, therefore, puts all its hope in the help of God.

Those who ponder deeply upon the justice of God and upon the sanctions of His Law will be filled with a reverential fear of God, and a sense of personal responsibility and liability to God. Such a fear will exclude the very beginnings of pride and self-absorption.

Archbishop Ullathorne writes: "This fear humbles the soul, awakens the sense of shame in her, and fills her with confusion. She begins to sigh over her miseries, to hate her sins and vanities, and to supplicate the mercies of God" ("Groundwork of Christian Virtues," p. 375).

Prayer—(a) Fear of God.

Fear the Lord, O my soul, for He will be thy Judge.

Oblivionem fugiat. Fly all forgetfulness, and ever remember His commands.

To forget Thee, O my God, is to contemn Thee.

Gehenna. Most just Judge, I rightly deserve to be thrust down into hell.

Thou has spared me and forgiven me.

I will constantly reflect upon Thee, and learn to reverence Thee and to fear Thee.

I will make myself prudent by the remembrance of Thy judgment.

Vitam æternam. I will encourage myself by the thought of that eternal life promised to those who love Thee.

Desideria . . . amputare. I must hasten at once to cut down and root out the evil desires and the wrong tendencies in my soul.

Custodiens se omni hora. At every hour I must be on my guard and be ready to overcome myself.

My thoughts, tongue, hands, feet—nay, my very will itself, must be trained to obey Thee.

Regenerate my soul, O my Master!

This re-birth will cause me pain and will take me long to accomplish.

Make me brave and persevering in this fight against my lower nature.

In the hour of weakness may the thought of Thy anger and Thy punishments sustain me.

(*b*) *The Presence of God.*

Semper respici. Every moment, night and day, I am in Thy presence, O my God.

Ab aspectu Divinitatis videri. Thy eyes are upon my actions, and Thy angels are about me.

Thou art nearer to me than this, for Thou art within me.

My soul is Thy dwelling-place. "Thou searchest the heart and the reins."

Every desire of my will, every movement of my carnal passions, is known to Thee.

Novit cogitationes. Thou knowest every thought that rises in my mind.

If I remember this, I shall not dare to give entrance to evil thoughts, and "I shall be unspotted before Thee, and shall keep myself from mine iniquity."

Voluntatem propriam facere prohibemur. Save me from following my own will.

To do my own will is to be in danger of hell; for my will naturally turns to what is corrupt and abominable.

Rogamus ut fiat voluntas in nobis. May Thy will be always done by me.

In the desires of the flesh, I must believe that Thou, O God, art present to me.

When my feeble will turns to what is evil, may I then, in the hour of danger, remember Thy presence.

"O Lord, all my desires are before Thee."

Holiness becometh Thy house, O God.

May I preserve it from all defilement.

I must set a watch at the doors of my heart.

"Go not after thy concupiscences, O my soul."

To allow any passion to awaken in the soul is a foolish and dangerous thing.

It will cause me a long and painful struggle to subdue it.

Death is seated at the very entrance of delight.

May I ever be wise and firm enough to deny myself what is wrong at its first suggestion.

Dominus de cœlo semper respicit.

Thy eyes are ever upon me.

Give me a good understanding, and make me earnest in seeking Thee, O my God.

Pius est, et exspectat nos converti.

Thou art merciful, and waitest patiently for me.

I have many failures, but as long as I will struggle Thou wilt wait for me and help me.

Gradually, step by step, in spite of opposition and wounds, I hope to win my way up the hill of virtue.

Inutiles factos.

Only when I give up the struggle and turn aside into easy ways and make friends with the enemy—only then wilt Thou declare me unprofitable.

May I ever remember my responsibility, and the judgment that awaits me.

May the remembrance of Thy presence, O my King, encourage me to fight bravely and perseveringly till the victory is won.

Second Degree.

Text.

Secundus humilitatis gradus est, si propriam quis non amans voluntatem, desideria sua non delectetur implere; sed vocem illam Domini factis imitetur dicentis: "*Non veni facere voluntatem meam, sed ejus qui misit me*" (Joan vi. 38). Item dicit Scriptura: "*Voluntas habet pœnam, et necessitas parit coronam.*"

The second degree of humility is, that a man love not his own will, nor delight in gratifying his own desires, but carry out in his deeds that saying of the Lord: "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." And again Scripture saith: "Self-will hath punishment, but necessity wins a crown."

Thoughts.

Perfection has three elements, or, rather, there are three aspects of perfection:

(*a*) *Charity*, or the perfect love of God—"God alone."

(*b*) *Humility*, which we may sum up as "nothing of self."

(*c*) *Detachment*, which we may sum up as "nothing of creatures."

The second degree of humility and the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth degrees treat of this surrender of self.

Self-will is a cruel tyrant, and the more obedient we are to it, the more cruel will be the chains with which it will bind us. It is worthy of nothing but hatred: it is the source of evil, and the destroyer of virtue. It is not sufficient to check particular acts of tyranny; we must attack the tyrant itself. Fear of God will purify and subject us to God, but it is a long and arduous work to perfect that submission.

In Chapter IV. we are commanded to *hate* our self-will.

"What does God hate or punish except self-will? Let self-will cease, and there will be no hell. On what does that fire feed except on *self-will?*" (St. Bernard).

We have put before us here a higher motive for undertaking this work than the fear of God—viz., the imitation of Jesus Christ, Who said: "I came not to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me."

"*Self-will has punishment,*" etc. This verse is not in Holy Scripture. Some think that St. Benedict is giving the sense of various passages of Scripture; others, that he is quoting a proverb well known at that time.

Prayer.

Help me, O Lord, to mount this second step of the ladder of humility.

There is no sacrifice so pleasing to Thee as the sacrifice of my own will.

There is no offering so acceptable to Thee as that of a humble heart.

Non amans voluntatem. I must love rather to subdue my will than to cherish it.

Thou didst create me to do Thy will.

This is the only reason for my presence on earth.

If I neglect this, my life will be a failure; I shall be useless to Thee, and Thou wilt reject me.

Desideria sua implere non delectetur. I must not delight in gratifying my own desires, but rather strive to overcome them even when lawful.

The more I resist and submit my own will, the more I shall progress.

The more obstinate I am in seeking my own will, the more injury I shall do to my soul.

I pour all my will into Thine, O Lord.

May Thy will be done by me and concerning me in time and eternity.

THIRD DEGREE.

Text.

Tertius humilitatis gradus est, ut quis pro Dei amore omni obedientia se subdat majori, imitans Dominum, de quo dicit Apostolus: "*Factus obediens usque ad mortem.*"

The third degree of humility is, that a man for the love of God submit himself to his Superior in all obedience, imitating the Lord, of Whom the Apostle saith: "He was made obedient even unto death."

Thoughts.

Humility grows in the soul first and principally through the gift of God's grace; but there is need also of labour and effort to restrain the exterior and to master whatever resists humility. The man who sees the danger of self-will and is anxious to overcome it will value the great helps offered in the religious life. It is a state of life in which he can submit his will to all obedience. He gives the right to dispose of his person and time to another; he lives according to a rule of life by which each hour of the day has an appointed duty, which he must do in spite of any repugnance he may feel. If a man, for the love of Christ, submits himself to a life of

complete obedience, both interior as well as exterior, and perseveres in it "even unto death," in imitation of his Divine Master, he has taken the very best means possible to overcome pride and self-will, and to obtain interior humility and submission to God.

Prayer.

Pro Dei amore. For the love of Thee, O my Master, I will subject myself in all obedience to my Superior.

Omni obedientia. My submission shall not be limited in any way.

The harder the commands Thou layest upon me, the more faithful I will try to be.

The more bitter the obedience is to me, the more I will appreciate it as the medicine of my soul.

Majori. Intelligently and willingly I submit myself to the direction of a man.

I choose him as Thy representative.

I will therefore accept, as if from Thee, any treatment from him.

I submit my judgment and will cheerfully, humbly, and completely.

All I desire is to overcome myself in every way.

Obediens usque ad mortem. Day by day, year by year, even until death, I determine to remain stable in this my resolve.

May my self-will and self-love be gradually worn away, till I live for Thee alone.

Fourth Degree.

Text.

Quartus humilitatis gradus est, si in ipsa obedientia duris et contrariis rebus, vel etiam quibuslibet irrogatis injuriis, tacita conscientia patientiam amplectatur, et sustinens non lassescat, vel discedat, dicente Scriptura: "*Qui perseveraverit usque in finem, hic salvus erit.*" Item: "*Confortetur cor tuum, et sustine Dominum.*" Et ostendens fidelem pro Domino universa etiam contraria sustinere debere, dicit ex persona sufferentium: "*Propter te morte afficimur tota die; æstimati sumus sicut oves occisionis.*" Et securi de spe retributionis divinæ, subsequuntur gaudentes, et dicentes: "*Sed in his omnibus superamus propter eum, qui dilexit nos.*" Et item alio loco Scriptura: "*Probasti nos* (inquit), *Deus, igne nos examinasti, sicut igne examinatur argentum: induxisti nos in laqueum; posuisti tribulationes in dorso nostro.*" Et ut ostendat sub Priore debere nos esse, subsequitur, dicens: "*Imposuisti homines super capita nostra.*" Sed et præceptum Domini in adversis et injuriis per patientiam adimplentes, percussi in maxillam, præbent et alteram, auferenti tunicam, dimittunt et pallium, angariati milliario vadunt et duo, cum Paulo Apostolo falsos fratres sustinent, et maledicentes se benedicunt.

The fourth degree of humility is, that if in this very obedience hard and contrary things—nay, even injuries—are done to him, he should embrace them patiently with a quiet conscience, and not grow weary or give in, as the Scripture saith: "He that shall persevere to the end shall be saved." And again: "Let thy heart be comforted and wait for the Lord." And showing how the faithful man ought to bear all things, however contrary, for the Lord, it saith in the person of the afflicted: "For Thee we suffer death all the day long; we are esteemed as sheep for the slaughter." And secure in their hope of the divine reward, they go on with joy, saying: "But in all these things we overcome through Him Who hath loved us." And so in another place Scripture saith: "Thou hast proved us, O God; Thou hast tried us as silver is tried by fire; Thou hast led us into the snare, and hast laid tribulation on our backs." And in order to shew that we ought to be under a Superior, it goes on to say: "Thou hast placed men over our heads." Moreover, fulfilling the precept of the Lord by patience in adversities and injuries, they who are struck on one cheek offer the other; to him who taketh away their coat they leave also their cloak; and being forced to walk one mile, they go two. With Paul, the Apostle, they bear with false brethren, and bless those that curse them.

Thoughts.

This degree is really contained in the last one; but it is necessary to point out that, as obedience is the weapon against self, it is especially effective when the obedience is hard and trying. "We are to suffer death all the day long," and remain patient and cheerful, because with spiritual insight we can see that, though the medicine is unpleasant to the taste, it is yet just what we need. We can all settle down peacefully to the regular routine of the monastery, but when anything happens to us outside that routine we may feel inclined to resent it. If we behave in this way, then our obedience has ceased to be a cure for self-will. The ordinary discipline has become sweet and easy, and we have forgotten that we meant to wage war against self-love. We have not learnt to rejoice in sufferings, and to bless those who persecute us. Our obedience is therefore becoming in great measure *futile*, for it is not doing the work which it was meant to do—viz., to destroy self-love. Our obedience is also *imperfect*, for we are obedient until our self-love is wounded, and then we repine and grumble and harbour a grievance. We ought, on the contrary, to love and value everything that wounds self-love to the quick. "Thou hast placed *men* over our heads," not angels—men who will at times speak harshly, or act imprudently or from human motives; men who will try our patience. We must be "solicitous for opprobria," and rejoice to know that we are on the right road to God,

because of the *dura et aspera* which we meet with and patiently endure.

"True obedience," says St. Gregory the Great, "does not discuss the intention of the Superior nor question his commands. He who is seeking for the good which results from obedience should consider not the work imposed, but rather the fruit he will derive from its performance" (In "I. Reg.," 12, c. 4). The old monastic Superiors used obedience as a means to sanctify their disciples. In the "Institutes of Cassian," Book IV., chapter viii., we read: "And his anxiety and chief part of his instruction, through which the juniors brought to him may be able in due course to mount to the greatest heights of perfection, will be to teach him first to conquer his own wishes; and, anxiously and diligently practising him in this, he will of set purpose contrive to give him such orders as he knows to be contrary to his liking, for, taught by many examples, the Fathers assert that a monk, and especially if he be still young, cannot bridle the desire of his concupiscence unless he has first learnt by obedience to mortify his wishes. And so they lay it down that the man who has not first learnt to overcome his desires cannot possibly stamp out anger or sulkiness . . . nor can he preserve true humility of heart, or lasting unity with the brethren, or a stable and continuous concord."

Cassian also relates how the Abbot John gave up the life of a solitary for that of a cenobite, in order that he might have the opportunity of practising the virtues of obedience and subjection which seemed [illegible] of the reach of a solitary. A certain Abbot once

harshly rebuked and penanced publicly a monk who was known for his meekness and gentleness. The Abbot explained his action to a visitor who had ventured to expostulate privately with him: "I know well that he is innocent; but as it is not a kind, but an unkind thing to take the bread out of the mouth of a hungry child, so a Superior injures both himself and his subject if he does not continually offer him (so far as he sees him able to bear it) the means of increasing his crown either by insult, humiliation, or contempt. For three reasons in such a case would harm be done: first, because the subject is deprived of the reward for patient endurance; second, the Superior has neglected to benefit others by the example of virtue; third (and this is the most important), it often happens that those who seemed at one time to be most patient in endurance, if they are not practised in this from time to time, and kept on the alert by harsh treatment, come to lose their former meekness and patience."

How quickly should we advance in true mortification of self if Superiors were brave enough and subjects humble enough to use the weapon of obedience *actively* against the enemy! We must, at the least, patiently, cheerfully, and with appreciation welcome anything that we find hard and trying.

Prayer.

I have submitted myself to all obedience for love of Thee, O my God.

Duris. I must not retract my submission when I feel obedience to be hard.

Many things are hard to me, but I must not neglect them.

Contrariis rebus. Many things are contrary to my wishes, but I must humbly submit my will.

Injuriis. I may receive what seems to me unfair treatment.

Bear such trials, O my soul, in silence. Let no word of repining or of complaint escape thee.

Tacita conscientia. Give me the grace, O my God, of patience and humility.

Non lassescat. May I never grow weary or give in.

Qui perseveraverit. Daily perseverance against my weakness will save me; I will try to continue my efforts till the end of my life.

Be ye strengthened, O my soul—"Viriliter age! confortetur cor tuum!"

Sustine Dominum. Trust not, however, to your own strength, but in all events of your life look to the help of the Lord.

Ostendens fidelem. If I am faithful to Thee, my Lord, I shall be ready "to suffer death all the day long," meekly and humbly accepting the

Sicut oves occisionis. wounds to self-love received in every duty of the day.

Gaudentes dicentes. At first we shall sow in tears, but later shall reap in joy, for "in all things we shall overcome through Him Who hath loved us."

Probasti nos. Thou hast proved and tested us, O Lord.

Thou hast tried us as silver is tried in the fire.

Thou hast laid tribulation on our backs.

Sub Priore. To test us, Thou hast placed *men* over our heads.

Debere nos esse. It is salutary for us thus to be ruled by frail men.

In adversis et injuriis. We learn patience by bearing injuries and trials as from Thee, with generous hearts.

Maledicentes se benedicunt. We must not only bear them, but bless them as the instruments of our purification.

FIFTH DEGREE.

Text.

Quintus humilitatis gradus est, si omnes cogitationes malas cordi suo advenientes, vel mala a se absconse commissa per humilem confessionem Abbati non celaverit suo. Hortatur nos de hac re Scriptura, dicens: "Revela Domino viam tuam, et spera in eo." Et item dicit: "Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus, quoniam in sæculum misericordia ejus." Et item Propheta: "Delictum meum cognitum tibi feci, et injustitias meas non operui. Dixi, pronuntiabo adversum me injustias meas Domino, et tu remisisti impietatem cordis mei."

The fifth degree of humility is, to hide from one's Abbot none of the evil thoughts that beset one's heart, nor the sins committed in secret, but humbly to confess them. Concerning which the Scripture exhorteth us, saying, "Make known thy way unto the Lord, and hope in Him." And again: "Confess to the Lord, for He is good, and His mercy endureth for ever." So also the prophet saith: "I have made known to Thee my offences, and mine iniquities I have not hidden. I said, I will confess against myself my iniquities to the Lord: and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my heart."

Thoughts.

"Humility," says St. Gregory, "admits light to the understanding, and pride shuts it out." A proud man is self-sufficient. He is blind to his defects and weaknesses, even though these are known to all who are associated with him. His imagination

supplies him with a character of himself, with which he is pleased. He prefers to cover up the wounds of his soul, and to close his eyes to what needs immediate attention. He feels no need for a Director; he has nothing to be healed, nor does he require advice; he has the habit of passing over lightly what a Director would insist upon as important; his examination of himself rather flatters this fictitious self which lives in his imagination. He naturally wishes others to have the same opinion of himself as he has, and is hurt when his conduct is, as he puts it, misunderstood and misinterpreted. He has a feeling that he has a peculiarly complex character which he has never found anyone as yet experienced enough to understand. St. Gregory says: "When the proud pretend to be just, when they parade their actions as worthy of praise, then by the just judgment of God it happens that the more they strive to deceive others, the more they deceive themselves. For they lose the careful eye of self-examination: they neglect to study their own real condition, and so think themselves to be what others say they are, and to be holy not because they are so, but because they are called so." And again he says: "Truth flies from the mind which it does not find humble." There is no hope for such a character unless self-knowledge is obtained from someone else. The very revelation of himself to a Director will help him to see his faults. He will hear a dispassionate judgment upon his own case. It is not that he himself has not sufficient knowledge to make such a judgment, but he has not sufficient humility to make

such a judgment of himself. Everyone must be afraid of settling his own case, and submit in all humility to the guidance of another.

It seems to have been the custom in St. Benedict's time to manifest one's conscience to the Superior. Nowadays this manifestation is mainly confined to the Spiritual Director. This degree teaches us that self-manifestation to another is necessary, and this need will be felt when one begins to try seriously to advance in mortification and prayer.

Prayer.

Omnes cogitationes malas. All my evil thoughts, inclinations, and sins, will I humbly reveal to Thy representative.

This will be humble confession to Thee, O my God.

I will not justify myself or gloss over my failings, and will rather condemn than excuse myself.

I dare not raise my eyes to heaven, so guilty am I in Thy sight.

O my soul, "Make known thy way unto the Lord, and [then thou canst] hope in him" (Ps. xxxvi. 5).

"Be subject to the Lord, and pray to Him" (ver. 7).

Stand in confusion and subjection before Thy God, thy sins accusing thee.

The prayer of the humble man shall pierce the clouds.

"Confess to the Lord, for He is good, and His mercy endureth for ever."

I have made known to Thee mine offence, and mine iniquities I have not hidden.

I will confess my iniquities to the Lord.

When I have done this, "Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my heart."

"He who is a master to himself has a fool for a scholar" (St. Bernard).

Sixth Degree.

Text.

Sextus humilitatis gradus est, si omni vilitate vel extremitate contentus sit monachus, et ad omnia quæ sibi injunguntur velut operarium malum se judicet et indignum, dicens sibi cum Propheta: "*Ad nihilum redactus sum et nescivi: ut jumentum factus sum apud Te, et ego semper tecum*" (Ps. lxxii. 22, 23).

The sixth degree of humility is, for a monk to be contented with the meanest and worst of everything, and in all that is enjoined him to esteem himself a bad and worthless labourer, saying with the Prophet: "I have been brought to nothing, and I knew it not: I am become as a beast before Thee, yet I am always with Thee."

Thoughts.

The fifth degree teaches self-knowledge. The more our knowledge of self increases, the more deep will be the sense of our unworthiness and ingratitude. "Humility," says Gerson, "is the low opinion of oneself arising from the true knowledge of God and oneself." Is it possible that one who grumbles at his surroundings, or at menial work given to him, or at the want of appreciation of himself and his work shown by others, can be filled with a sense of his own unworthiness? Such faults spring from pride. True knowledge of his unworthiness would surely lead the religious to accept treatment which accorded with his belief of himself, and he would gladly welcome anything which would prevent his forgetting his unworthiness.

A truly humble religious will cheerfully accept the *worst work* or position or treatment or surround-

ings—nay, he will wish for this. He will prefer to be in subjection rather than to be in authority; to work for the poor rather than the rich; to "be wearied by labours for God than to receive the favours of this world"; to love what men consider hard and unpleasant. "Occasions," as the "Imitation of Christ" says, "do not make a man weak, but they show what he is." It is amidst poverty and hardship and in trying circumstances that the man of true humility is recognized.

Prayer.

I will humbly confess myself to be a sinner, and worthy of all punishment.

Omni vilitate et extremitate contentus sit monachus.

"Voluntarie sacrificabo Tibi" (Ps. liii. 8).

Willingly do I sacrifice all things to Thee and for Thee.

All earthly things are of no value to one whose heart is fixed on Thee.

"Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also" (Matt. vi. 21).

If I wish for comforts and honour, then my heart is fixed on the earth, and not on Thee, O my God.

Detach me from this world, and attach me to Thyself.

"For what have I in heaven but Thee; and beside Thee what do I desire on earth?

"Thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion for ever" (Ps. lxxii. 25, 26).

Do I not deserve what is worst and meanest?

Velut operarium malum se judicet.

I am a bad and unskilled workman.

I am worthless, and it is only Thy love that bears with me.

Ad nihilum redactus et nescivi. "I have been brought to nothing" in Thy sight by my selfish life.

So self-satisfied have I been that "I knew it not."

Ut jumentum factus. "I am as a beast before Thee"—a creature of earth with carnal desires and hopes.

Ego semper tecum. "But I am always with Thee"; I belong to Thee.

Help me to live worthily in Thy house, to be content with anything, and to think that, the lower and meaner the work Thou givest, the more suited it is to my misery.

Seventh Degree.

Text.

Septimus humilitatis gradus est, si omnibus se inferiorem et viliorem, non solum sua lingua pronuntiet, sed etiam intimo cordis credat affectu, humilians se, et dicens cum Propheta: "*Ego autem sum vermis et non homo, opprobrium hominum, et abjectio plebis* (Ps. xxi. 7): *Exaltatus sum, et humiliatus et confusus*" (Ps. lxxxvii. 16). Et item: "*Bonum mihi, quod humiliasti me, ut discam mandata tua*" (Ps. cxviii. 71, 73).

The seventh degree of humility is, that he should not only call himself with his tongue lower and viler than all, but also believe himself in his inmost heart to be so, humbling himself and saying with the Prophet: "I am a worm and no man, the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people: I have been exalted, and cast down and confounded." And again: "It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I may learn Thy commandments."

Thoughts.

"Humility is the virtue whereby a person, by means of a most thorough knowledge of himself, becomes lowly (*vilis*) to himself" (St. Bernard); so lowly, indeed, does he become in his own estimation that he thinks himself to be worse than anyone else.

The language of the Saints, which may seem exaggeration to us, describes what they felt and believed. A ray of God's light entered their souls, and they became convinced that of themselves they were nothing, and that all the good in them was caused by God, and that all they could lay claim to were their failures and deficiencies. They saw merely the exterior of other men and their actions; but of their interior motives, graces, and temptations they knew nothing. Hence this degree is characteristic of those who have great light from God, and great knowledge of Him and of themselves. It is the highest step of humility, and follows naturally the deep humility of soul acquired by the earlier degrees.

"You incur no risk whatever," says St. Bernard, "by thinking yourself to be far below others; but not only do you incur a very grave danger, you also bring upon yourself a positive evil by exalting yourself even a little above anyone else, and that, too, even in thought, since Truth Himself may see that the person whom you thus set beneath yourself is in every respect your superior. Wherefore, compare not yourself with those who are greater, nor with those who are less, nor with those who are equal, nor with anyone at all" (Serm. 37).

Prayer.

"I am a worm and no man, the shame of men, and the outcast of the people."

Omnibus se inferiorem et viliorem.

How dare I prefer myself to any other? Because I am not conscious to myself of anything, I am not thereby justified.

If Thou, O my God, hadst given to another the

graces and circumstances Thou hast given to me, he would have corresponded to them better than I have done.

Intimo cordis credat affectu. I do not know whether I am worthy of love or hatred; whether I shall persevere or fail.

Dismas the thief was preferred to Judas the Apostle.

The future is in Thy hands, O my God.

"The last shall be first, and the first last."

"Publicans and sinners shall precede me into the kingdom of God" if I have the spirit of the Pharisees.

The more Thou givest to me, the greater return do I owe to Thee.

Omnibus inferiorem. I will sit in the lowest place at Thy table, and wait until Thou dost judge me worthy to go up higher.

Far from me be all self-complacency and harsh judgment of others.

The thought of past sin should humble me below all.

St. Bonaventure, in Solil., C. 1, writes: "O Lord my God, Thou hast stamped my soul with Thy sweet image, and I have imposed the hateful image of the devil. Alas, alas! wretched man, to stamp the image of the devil upon that of thy God! Why do I not hate his reflection, whose name I hate? The devil sinned, not having experience of the punishments of God, but I, knowing these punishments, have sinned with contempt; he was once only in the state of innocence, but I have been many times restored to it; he rebelled against the

God Who made him, but I against the God Who remade me; he deserted God Who permitted him to leave Him, but I fled from the God Who followed after me; he remained in his malice against the God Who had rejected him, but I against the God Who recalled me in His mercy; he is against the God Who does not seek for him, but I against the God Who has died for me." With such affections ought I to humble myself below all, and believe that, except for God's help, I should be worse than all.

"It is a great and rare virtue that, though performing great things, you do not know that you are great; and that, though your sanctity is manifest to all, it is yet hidden from yourself" (St. Bernard).

EIGHTH DEGREE.

Text.

Octavus humilitatis gradus est, si nihil agat monachus, nisi quod communis monasterii regula, vel majorum cohortantur exempla.

The eighth degree of humility is, for a monk to do nothing except what is authorized by the common Rule of the monastery, or the example of the seniors.

Thoughts.

There is a wrong singularity and a right.

The evil of "singularity" may creep into our actions, or into the motives for which or the manner in which we perform them. It is wrong to do anything merely to gain the esteem of others, or to win a reputation for holiness. St. Bernard remarks: "He who loves singularity is more pleased by one fast when others are dining than seven days' fasting in

company with others; and one private short prayer is more valued by them than the whole Night Office." We must avoid any posing, or any conduct which may impress others with the idea that we are not "like the rest of men." We must live the community life, and not affect to be superior to it. Excessive self-assertion is against this degree. There is, however, a good form of singularity which makes a stand against laxity. Tepid religious will think lightly of Rules and holy customs. An earnest religious will not allow himself to be influenced by the lax tone of a section of the community, but will remember that his progress in holiness in great measure depends upon the exact observance of his vows and Rules. To keep the Rules strictly, to guard obedience, to lead a life of prayer, to love observe silence, to study and holy reading, to find God in the solitude of his cell, is not the singularity which is here condemned, but the duty of one who wishes to advance in the spiritual life.

Prayer.

Thou hast made me, O my Father, a member of Thy family.

Nihil agat monachus, nisi quod communis regula vel majorum cohortantur exempla.

I must never depart from the common Rule.

I must keep the common observances, and live the common life.

The common life is the safeguard of humility.

To assert my own view, or to act according to my own judgment, is to exercise self-will.

Thou, my Lord, art always with Thy disciples.

If I withdraw myself and lead my own life, I shall lose the graces that Thou givest and the helps of community life.

Save me, O my Master, from the self-sufficient spirit of the Pharisee.

I am not better than the rest of my brethren.

I need their help and their example.

My zeal for perfection must show itself, not in doing differently from others, but in doing what others do with an ever-increasing fervour and perfection.

I will give to Thee ready and humble obedience, but will not allow myself to appear outwardly more ready and humble than others.

I will, for Thy sake, try to do all my duties as perfectly as possible, but I must avoid trying to appear always a little better than others.

I must, of course, be firm in principle.

Help me never to agree to what is wrong, even in the smallest degree.

Make me brave against the ridicule or criticism of the tepid.

My hatred of singularity must not hinder me from trying to lead a life of singular virtue.

I must avoid outward singularity, but be as a "light before men"—eminent for holiness of life obtained by the perfect performance of common duties.

Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Degrees.

Text.

Nonus humilitatis gradus est, si linguam ad loquendum prohibeat monachus, et taciturnitatem habens, usque ad interrogationem non loquatur, monstrante Scriptura: Quia "*in multiloquio non effugietur peccatum*"; et quia "*vir linguosus non dirigetur super terram.*"

Decimus humilitatis gradus est, si non sit facilis, ac promptus in risu, quia scriptum est: "*Stultus in risu exaltat vocem suam.*"

Undecimus humilitatis gradus est, si cum loquitur monachus, leniter et sine risu, humiliter et cum gravitate, vel pauca verba et rationabilia loquatur, et non sit clamosus in voce; sicut scriptum est: "*Sapiens verbis innotescit paucis.*"

The ninth degree of humility is, that a monk refrain his tongue from speaking, keeping silence until a question be asked him, as the Scripture sheweth: "In much talking thou shalt not avoid sin"; and, "The talkative man shall not be directed upon the earth."

The tenth degree of humility is, that he be not easily moved and prompt to laughter, because it is written: "The fool lifteth up his voice in laughter."

The eleventh degree of humility is, that when a monk speaketh, he do so gently and without laughter, humbly, gravely, with few and reasonable words, and that he be not noisy in his speech, as it is written: "A wise man is known by the fewness of his words."

Thoughts.

The five last degrees proceed from the interior to the exterior. Exterior humility is not only the result of humility of soul, but it protects and fosters interior humility. It also ministers to edification. St. Dorotheus says: "The soul is moved and affected by what is done and felt in the body. Hence, an old man among us used to say that corporal labour leads straight to humility. Labour humiliates the body and brings down its pride, and when the body is humiliated the soul is humbled. The old man justly said that bodily labour brings the soul to

humility." In the same way, all external self-restraint in speaking, laughing, and in demeanour, checks pride and independence of soul.

We have already considered St. Benedict's teaching on silence in Chapter VI. A love of talking is not compatible with serious thought. The religious should endeavour by silence to gain that recollectedness and that habit of thought which will reveal God to him and his own character to himself. When a monk does speak, it should be humbly, gravely, and reasonably. Immoderate laughter is a sign that recollection, seriousness, and self-restraint are absent. Blosius says: "Excessive and undisciplined laughter breaks down the barriers of modesty, dissipates the soul, and drives away the grace of the Holy Ghost." St. Bonaventure's advice is: "Show thyself friendly, genial, and peaceful to all, but without dissipation."

Let us love silence and gravity.

We may take the following passage of St. Ephrem and use it as food for mental prayer.

Prayer (*St. Ephrem; Or. paticutia*, tom. 3, p. 102).

Possess silence, brother, as a strong wall.

For silence will enable thee to subdue the uprisings of passion, for thou fightest from a height while they lie beneath thy feet.

Therefore, possess silence in the fear of God, and no weapons of the enemy shall harm thee.

For silence joined to the fear of God is a fiery chariot which bears its possessor up to heaven. This the prophet Elias urges upon thee, who, loving

silence together with the fear of God, was taken up into heaven.

O silence, whereby the monk advances in perfection; ladder reaching to heaven; way of the kingdom of heaven!

O silence, mother of compunction, mirror of sins, in which man sees his transgressions!

O silence, which hinderest not tears, mother of meekness, companion of humility!

O silence, spouse of humility and enlightenment of the mind!

O silence, searcher of thoughts and promoter of discernment!

O silence, mother of all good, support of temperance, and obstacle to gluttony!

O silence, school of reading and of prayer!

O silence, calmness of the thoughts and secure haven!

O habit of silence, dispeller of anxiety!

O silence, sweet yoke, a light burden, refreshing and carrying him who carries it, joy of the soul and the heart; restraint of the ears, of the eyes, and of the tongue!

O silence, destruction of hypocrisy and enemy of impurity; mother of reverence!

O silence, guardian of the affections, aid of all virtue; promoter of poverty; soil of Christ yielding good fruit!

O silence, joined to the fear of God, rampart and defence of those who wish to strive for the kingdom of heaven!

Above all things, brother, possess that "good part

which Mary chose." "For this Mary, since she is an example of silence, sat at the Lord's feet; she clung to Him alone. Therefore did He praise her, saying: 'Mary hath chosen the better part, and it shall not be taken from her'" (St. Ephrem).

When a religious does speak it should be gently, humbly, gravely, quietly; and his words should be few and sensible.

The frivolous, giddy man is condemned as a "fool."

Twelfth Degree.

Text.

Duodecimus humilitatis gradus est, si non solum corde monachus, sed etiam ipso corpore humilitatem videntibus se semper indicet, id est, in Opere Dei, in oratorio, in monasterio, in horto, in via, in agro vel ubicumque sedens, ambulans, vel stans, inclinato sit semper capite, defixis in terram aspectibus, reum se omni hora de peccatis suis existimans, jam se tremendo Dei judicio præsentari existimet: dicens sibi in corde semper illud, quod publicanus ille evangelicus, fixis in terram oculis, dixit: "*Domine, non sum dignus ego peccator, levare oculos meos ad cælum.*" Et item cum Propheta: "*Incurvatus et humiliatus sum usquequaque.*"

The twelfth degree of humility is, that the monk, not only in his heart, but also in his very exterior, always shew his humility to all who see him—that is, in the work of God; in the oratory, in the monastery, in the garden, on the road, in the field or wherever he may be, whether sitting, walking or standing, with head always bent down, and eyes fixed on the earth, that he ever think of the guilt of his sins, and imagine himself already present before the terrible judgment-seat of God; always saying in his heart what the publican in the Gospel said with his eyes fixed on the earth: "Lord, I am a sinner, and not worthy to raise mine eyes to heaven"; and again, with the Prophet: "I am bowed down and humbled on every side."

Ergo his omnibus humilitatis gradibus ascensis, monachus mox ad charitatem Dei perveniet illam, quæ perfecta foras mittit

Having, therefore, ascended all these degrees of humility, the monk will presently arrive at that love of God which, being

timorem; per quam universa quæ prius non sine formidine observabat, absque ullo labore velut naturaliter ex consuetudine incipiet custodire, non jam timore gehennæ, sed amore Christi et consuetudine ipsa bona, et delectatione virtutum. Quod Dominus in operario suo mundo a vitiis et peccatis, Spiritu sancto dignabitur demonstrare.

perfect, casteth out fear; whereby he shall begin to keep, without labour, and as it were naturally and by custom, all those precepts which he had hitherto observed through fear—no longer through dread of hell, but for the love of Christ, and of a good habit and delight in virtue, which God will vouchsafe to manifest by the Holy Spirit in His labourer, now cleansed from vice and sin.

Thoughts.

This degree legislates for the discipline of the body. There must be restraint of the body, but it must be the result of the remembrance of God's presence, and of the sense of personal unworthiness in His sight. Humility of the body without humility of the soul is hypocrisy. We must not adopt poses or angles of piety merely to edify others, for singularity of any kind has already been condemned in this chapter. This discipline of the body is not only the result of inward humility, but is also a means both to obtain and safeguard humility of soul. We cannot remember God and be filled with compunction for our sins if our eyes are allowed to wander and our heads are in the air. To guard the eyes is to guard the mind.

St. Benedict says that wherever we may be we must practise this degree of humility. A monk must never be unrestrained, but he must be modest and disciplined, evidently humble, full of piety, winning the reverence of all by the grace and holiness which make him known to be a truly spiritual man, a man of God.

Let us, then, try continuously to mount this ladder of holiness. Servile fear, which in the beginning subjected us to God, will give place to the love of God, and the labour and weariness of service will turn to joy of heart and devotion; for He will bear our burdens, He will refresh us. Banish self, then, in every form! Think not of self, trust not to self. God must become our one thought and desire, and the prop of our weakness.

Prayer.

Non solum corde sed etiam corpore. True humility will make me in some measure like to Thee, O my Master. Thou wast humble of heart and humble of body.

Videntibus se indicet. Thou didst influence and win men by Thy sweet gentleness and humility. I must imitate Thee.

In opere Dei. When I stand before God to perform the "Opus Dei" with the Angels about me, what awe and reverence should fill my heart!

Inclinato capite. With eyes guarded, head bent, filled with the sense of my sinfulness, I must

Reum se de peccatis. remain before my God, as before my Judge.

Existimans. My only possible attitude is that of self-accusation.

"Lord, I, a sinner, am not worthy to raise my eyes to heaven."

"I am bowed down, O my God, and humbled on every side."

Dicens in corde semper. This sentiment must be the characteristic note of my spiritual life.

In oratorio, etc. It must dwell in my heart always; in the oratory, in the monastery, on the road, in the fields. Wherever I may be, this thought must rule me.

This humility will win Thy mercy and Thy love, O my God.

Ad charitatem, quæ perfecta foras mittit timorem. Thou wilt look down on the humility of Thy servant, and bless me with the "love which casteth out fear."

Amore Christi; consuetudine bona; delectatione virtutum. How richly dost Thou reward Thy labourer! Fear changes into the love of Christ; vicious habits give place to virtuous ones; virtue itself becomes sweet and easy.

Spiritu sancto dignabitur demonstrare. Thou dost send Thy Holy Spirit thus to cleanse us from our vices and our sins. Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy children, and kindle in us the fire of Thy love!

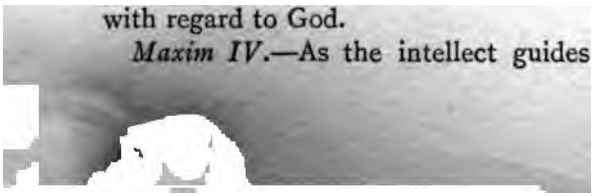
Humility.

Maxim I.—Humility is the mortification of the superior soul—*i.e.*, of the intellect and will—and is even of more importance than the mortification of sensitive nature.

Maxim II.—Just as concupiscence is the deordination of the sensitive nature, so pride or self-exaltation is the deordination of the superior soul.

Maxim III.—The mortification of humility puts us down in intellect and will to our right position with regard to God.

Maxim IV.—As the intellect guides the will, so



the foundation of humility is in the intellect—*i.e.*, in the realization of our true position in regard to God.

Maxim V.—Humility of intellect implies two things:

(*a*) Realizing *what God is*—His infinite goodness, greatness, claims upon us, etc.

(*b*) Realizing *what we are*—our dependence on God, sinfulness, nothingness, and ingratitude.

Maxim VI.—The more we realize (*a*), so much the more do we realize (*b*); hence, as our knowledge of God increases, our opinion of ourselves decreases. This accounts for the intense self-depreciation of the Saints.

"Holy men, the more they advance in virtue, the more unworthy do they see themselves to be; for when they are near to the light they discover in themselves all that was hidden, and the more beautiful does that appear upon which their gaze is fixed, so much the more deformed do they appear to themselves. For every one when illumined by the true light is shown to himself, and by learning what justice is, he is also taught what sin is" (St. Gregory, "Morals," lib. 32, sect. iii.).

Maxim VII.—Humility of the will follows upon humility of the intellect, and makes us welcome humiliations.

Once persuaded in mind that we are worth nothing, then our wills accept without murmur treatment which accords with this belief—"Humilitatis signum est ignominiæ perfecta toleratio" (St. John Climacus).

N.B.—One who fears to forget that he is nothing loves to be reminded by humiliations of the fact.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE DIVINE OFFICE AT NIGHT

Text.

Hyemis tempore, id est, a kalendis Novembris usque ad Pascha, juxta considerationem rationis, octava hora noctis surgendum est, ut modice amplius de media nocte pausetur, et jam digesti surgant. Quod vero restat post Vigilias, a fratribus qui Psalterii vel lectionum aliquid indigent, meditationi inserviatur. A Pascha autem usque ad supradictas kalendas Novembris, sic temperetur hora Vigiliarum agenda, ut parvissimo intervallo, quo fratres ad necessaria naturæ exeant, custodito, mox Matutini, qui incipiente luce agendi sunt, subsequantur.

In winter-time—that is, from the first of November until Easter—the brethren shall rise at what may be reasonably calculated to be the eighth hour of the night; so that, having rested till some time past midnight, they may rise, having had their full sleep. And let the time that remains after the night office be spent in study by those brethren who have still some part of the Psalter and lessons to learn. But from Easter to the first of November let the hour for the Night Office be so arranged that after a very short interval, during which the brethren may go out for the necessities of nature, Lauds, which are to be said at daybreak, may follow without delay.

CHAPTER IX

HOW MANY PSALMS ARE TO BE SAID AT THE NIGHT HOURS

Text.

Hyemis tempore, præmisso in primis versu: "*Deus in adjutorium meum intende, Domine ad adjuvandum me festina,*" cum Gloria; in secundo ter dicendum est: "*Domine labia mea aperies, et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam*"; cui subjungendus est tertius Psalmus, et "*Gloria.*" Post hunc, Psalmus nonagesimus quartus cum antiphona, aut certe decantandus. Inde sequatur ambrosianum. Deinde sex Psalmi cum antiphonis. Quibus dictis, dicto versu, benedicat Abbas, et sedentibus omnibus in scamnis, legantur vicissim a fratribus in codice super analogium tres lectiones, inter quas tria responsoria canantur. Duo responsoria sine "*Gloria*" dicantur. Post tertiam vero lectionem qui cantat, dicat "*Gloria*"; quam, dum incipit cantor dicere, mox omnes de sedilibus surgant ob honorem et reverentiam sanctissimæ Trinitatis.

Codices autem legantur in Vigiliis divinæ auctoritatis, tam veteris Testamenti, quam novi; sed et expositiones earum, quæ a nominatissimis, et orthodoxis, et Catholicis Patribus factæ sunt. Post has vero tres lectiones cum responsoriis suis, sequantur reliqui sex Psalmi cum *Alleluia* cantandi. Post hos lectio Apostoli sequatur, ex corde recitanda, et versus, et supplicatio Litaniæ, id est, "*Kyrie eleison.*" Et sic finiantur Vigiliæ nocturnæ.

In winter-time, after beginning with the verse, "Deus in adjutorium meum intende, Domine ad adjuvandum me festina," with the "Gloria," let the words, "Domine labia mea aperies, et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam," be repeated thrice; then the third Psalm, with a "Gloria," after which the ninety-fourth Psalm is to be said or sung, with an antiphon. Next let a hymn follow, and then six Psalms with antiphons. These being said, and also a versicle, let the Abbot give the blessing; and, all being seated, let three lessons be read by the brethren in turns from the book on the lectern. Between the lessons let three responsories be sung—two of them without a "Gloria," but after the third let the reader say the "Gloria"; and as soon as he begins it, let all rise from their seats out of honour and reverence to the Holy Trinity.

Let the divinely inspired books, both of the Old and New Testaments, be read at the Night Office, and also the commentaries upon them written by the most renowned orthodox and Catholic Fathers. After these three lessons with their responsories, let six more Psalms follow, to be sung with an "Alleluia." Then let a lesson from the Apostle be said by heart, with a verse and the petition of the Litany—that is, "Kyrie eleison." And so let the Night Office come to an end.

CHAPTER X

HOW THE NIGHT OFFICE IS TO BE SAID IN SUMMER TIME

Text.

A Pascha autem usque ad kalendas Novembris (ut supra dictum est) omnis Psalmodiæ quantitas teneatur: excepto, quod lectiones in codice, propter brevitatem noctium, minime legantur, sed pro ipsis tribus lectionibus una de veteri Testamento memoriter dicatur, quam breve responsorium subsequatur, et reliqua omnia (ut dictum est) impleantur, id est, ut nunquam minus a duodecim Psalmorum quantitate ad Vigilias nocturnas dicatur, exceptis tertio et nonagesimo quarto Psalmo.

From Easter to the first of November let the same number of Psalms be recited as prescribed above; only that no lessons are to be read from the book, on account of the shortness of the night, but instead of those three lessons, let one from the Old Testament be said by heart, followed by a short responsory, and the rest as before laid down; so that never less than twelve Psalms, not counting the third and ninety-fourth, be said at the Night Office.

CHAPTER XI

HOW THE NIGHT OFFICE IS TO BE SAID ON SUNDAYS

Text.

Dominico die temperius surgatur ad Vigilias, in quibus Vigiliis teneatur mensura; id est, modulatis (ut supra disposuimus) sex Psalmis, et versu, residentibus cunctis disposite et per ordinem in subselliis, legantur in codice (ut supra diximus) quatuor lectiones cum responsoriis suis, ubi tantum in responsorio quarto dicatur a cantante "*Gloria*," quam dum incipit, mox omnes cum reverentia surgant. Post quas lectiones sequantur ex ordine alii sex Psalmi cum Antiphonis, sicut anteriores, et Versus. Post quos iterum legantur aliæ quatuor lectiones cum responsoriis suis, ordine quosupra. Post quas dicantur tria cantica de Prophetis, quæ

On Sunday let the brethren rise earlier for the Night Office, which is to be arranged as follows. When six Psalms and a versicle have been sung (as already prescribed), and all are seated in their proper order, let four lessons with their responsories be read from the book as before; and to the last responsory only let the reader add a "Gloria," all reverently rising as soon as he begins it. After the lessons let six more Psalms follow in order, with their antiphons and versicle as before; and then let four more lessons with their responsories be read in the same way as the former. Next let three canticles from the Prophets be said, as the Abbot

instituerit Abbas; quæ cantica cum "*Alleluia*" psallantur. Dicto etiam versu, et benedicente Abbate, legantur aliæ quatuor lectiones de novo Testamento, ordine quo supra.

Post quartum autem responsorium incipiat Abbas hymnum: "*Te Deum laudamus.*" Quo dicto, legat Abbas lectionem de Evangelio, cum honore et tremore stantibus omnibus. Qua perlecta, respondeant omnes: "*Amen.*" Et subsequatur mox Abbas hymnum; "*Te decet laus:*" et data benedictione incipiant Matutinos. Qui ordo Vigiliarum omni tempore, tam æstatis, quam hyemis, æqualiter in die Dominico teneatur: nisi forte (quod absit) tardius surgatur, quia tunc aliquid de lectionibus breviandum est, aut responsoriis. Quod tamen omnino caveatur, ne proveniat. Quod si contigerit, digne inde satisfaciat Deo in oratorio, per cujus evenerit neglectum.

shall appoint, which canticles are to be sung with an "Alleluia." After the versicle, and the blessing given by the Abbot, let four more lessons from the New Testament be read as before.

At the end of the fourth responsory let the Abbot begin the hymn, "Te Deum laudamus." After the hymn, let the Abbot read the lesson from the Gospel, while all stand in awe and reverence. The Gospel being ended, let all answer, "Amen." Then let the Abbot go on with the hymn, "Te decet laus"; and after the blessing hath been given, let them begin Lauds. This order for the Night Office is always to be observed on Sunday, alike in summer and in winter, unless, perchance (which God forbid), they rise too late, in which case the lessons or responsories must be somewhat shortened. Let all care, however, be taken that this do not happen; but if it should, let him, through whose neglect it hath come to pass, make satisfaction for it in the oratory.

CHAPTER XII

HOW THE SOLEMN OFFICE OF LAUDS IS TO BE SAID

Text.

In Matutinis Dominico die, in primis dicatur sexagesimus sextus Psalmus sine antiphona in directum; post quem dicatur quinquagesimus Psalmus cum "*Alleluia.*" Post quem dicatur centesimus decimus septimus, et sexagesimus secundus; deinde "*Benedictiones*" *et* "*Laudes*"; lectio de Apocalypsi una ex corde, et responsorium, et ambrosianum, et versus, et canticum de Evangelio, et Litaniæ, et completum est.

At Lauds on Sunday let the sixtieth Psalm first be said straight on without an antiphon. After this let the fiftieth Psalm be said, with an "Alleluia," and then the hundred and seventeenth and the sixty-second. Then the "Benedicite" and Psalms of praise, a lesson from the Apocalypse, said by heart, a responsory, a hymn, a versicle, a canticle out of the Gospel, and the Litany, and so let it come to an end.

CHAPTER XIII

HOW LAUDS ARE TO BE SAID ON WEEK-DAYS

Text.

Diebus autem privatis Matutinorum solemnitas ita agatur, id est, ut sexagesimus sextus Psalmus dicatur sine antiphona, subtrahendo modice, sicut in Dominica ut omnes occurrant ad quinquagesimum, qui cum antiphona dicatur. Post quem alii duo Psalmi dicantur, secundum consuetudinem, id est, secunda feria, quintus, et trigesimus quintus. Tertia feria, quadragesimus secundus, et quinquagesimus sextus. Quarta feria, sexagesimus tertius, et sexagesimus quartus. Quinta feria, octogesimus septimus, et octogesimus nonus. Sexta feria, septuagesimus quintus, et nonagesimus primus. Sabbato autem, centesimus quadragesimus secundus, et canticum Deuteronomii, quod dividatur in duas "*Glorias.*" Nam ceteris diebus, canticum unumquodque die suo ex prophetis sicut psallit Ecclesia Romana, dicatur. Post hæc sequantur Laudes; deinde lectio una Apostoli memoriter recitanda, responsorium, ambrosianum, versus, canticum de Evangelio, Litaniæ, et completum est.

Plane agenda Matutina, vel Vespertina non transeant aliquando, nisi ultimo per ordinem Oratio Dominica, omnibus audientibus, dicatur a Priore, propter scandalorum spinas, quæ oriri solent, ut conventi per ipsius orationis sponsionem, qua dicunt: "*Dimitte nobis, sicut et nos dimittimus,*" purgent se ab hujusmodi vitio. Cæteris vero agendis, ultima pars ejus oratio-

On week-days let Lauds be celebrated in manner following. Let the sixty-sixth Psalm be said without an antiphon, as on Sundays, and somewhat slowly, in order that all may be in time for the fiftieth, which is to be said with an antiphon. After this let two other Psalms be said according to the custom—that is, on the Monday, the fifth and thirty-fifth; on Tuesday, the forty-second and fifty-sixth; on Wednesday, the sixty-third and sixty-fourth; on Thursday, the eighty-seventh and eighty-ninth; on Friday, the seventy-fifth and ninety-first; and on Saturday, the hundred and forty-second and the canticle from Deuteronomy, which must be divided into two "Glorias." But on the other days let canticles from the prophets be said, each on its proper day, according to the practice of the Roman Church. Then let the Psalms of Praise follow, and after them a lesson from the Apostle, to be said by heart, a responsory, a hymn, a versicle, a canticle out of the Gospel, the Litany, and so conclude.

The office of Lauds and Vespers, however, must never conclude without the Lord's Prayer being said aloud by the Superior, so that all may hear it, on account of the thorns of scandal which are wont to arise; so that the brethren, by the covenant which they make in that prayer when they say, "Forgive us as we forgive," may cleanse themselves of such faults. But at

nis dicatur, ut ab omnibus respondeatur: "*Sed libera nos a malo.*"

the other offices let the last part only of the prayer be said aloud, so that all may answer: "But deliver us from evil."

CHAPTER XIV

HOW THE OFFICE IS TO BE SAID ON SAINTS' DAYS

Text.

In Sanctorum vero festivitatibus, vel omnibus solemnitatibus, sicut diximus Dominico die agendum, ita agatur, excepto quod Psalmi, aut antiphonæ vel lectiones ad ipsum diem pertinentes dicantur. Modus autem supradictus teneatur.

On the festivals of Saints, and all other solemnities, let the Office be ordered as we have prescribed for Sundays, except that the Psalms, antiphons, and lessons suitable to the day are to be said. Their number, however, shall remain as we have appointed above.

CHAPTER XV

AT WHAT TIMES OF THE YEAR "ALLELUIA" IS TO BE SAID

Text.

A sancto Pascha usque ad Pentecosten, sine intermissione dicatur "*Alleluia,*" tam in Psalmis, quam in responsoriis. A Pentecoste usque ad caput Quadragesimæ, omnibus noctibus, cum sex posterioribus Psalmis tantum ad Nocturnos dicatur. Omni vero Dominica extra Quadragesimam, Cantica, Matutini, Prima, Tertia, Sexta, Nonaque cum "*Alleluia*" dicantur. Vespera vero cum antiphona. Responsoria vero nunquam dicantur cum Alleluia, nisi a Pascha usque ad Pentecosten.

From the holy feast of Easter until Pentecost, without interruption, let "Alleluia" be said both with the Psalms and the responsories. From Pentecost until the beginning of Lent it is to be said at the Night Office with the six latter Psalms only. But on every Sunday out of Lent let the Canticles, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, and None be said with "Alleluia," Vespers, however, with an antiphon. The responses are never to be said with "Alleluia," except from Easter to Pentecost.

CHAPTER XVI

HOW THE WORK OF GOD IS TO BE DONE IN THE DAYTIME

Text.

Ut ait Propheta; "*Septies in die laudem dixi tibi.*" Qui septenarius sacratus numerus a nobis sic implebitur, si Matutini, Primæ, Tertiæ, Sextæ, Nonæ, Vesperi, Completoriique tempore, nostræ servitutis officia persolvamus. Quia de his horis dixit Propheta: "*Septies in die laudem dixi tibi.*" Nam de nocturnis Vigiliis idem ipse Propheta ait: "*Media nocte surgebam ad confitendum tibi.*" Ergo his temporibus referamus laudes Creatori nostro super judicia justitiæ suæ, id est, Matutinis, Prima, Tertia, Sexta, Nona, Vespera, Completorio, et nocte surgamus ad confitendum ei.

As the Prophet saith: "Seven times in the day have I given praise to Thee." And we shall observe this sacred number of seven if, at the times of Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline, we fulfil the duties of our service. For it was of these hours of the day that he said: "Seven times in the day have I given praise to Thee"; just as the same Prophet saith of the night watches: "At midnight I arose to give Thee praise." At these times, therefore, let us sing the praises of our Creator for the judgments of His justice—that is, at Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline—and at night let us arise to praise Him.

CHAPTER XVII

HOW MANY PSALMS ARE TO BE SUNG AT THESE HOURS

Text.

Jam de Nocturnis, vel Matutinis digessimus ordinem Psalmodiæ, nunc de sequentibus horis videamus. Prima hora dicantur Psalmi tres sigillatim, et non sub una "*Gloria.*" Hymnus ejusdem horæ post versum, "*Deus in adjutorium meum intende,*" antequam Psalmi incipiantur. Post expletionem vero trium Psalmorum, recitetur lectio una, versus, et "*Kyrie eleison,*" et missæ sint. Tertia vero, Sexta, et Nona, eodem ordine celebrentur: versus, hymni earundem

We have now disposed the order of the Psalmody for the Night Office and for Lauds; let us proceed to arrange for the remaining Hours. At Prime let three Psalms be said separately, and not under one "Gloria." The hymn at this Hour is to follow the verse "Deus in adjutorium" before the Psalms are begun. Then, at the end of the three Psalms, let one lesson be said, with a versicle, the "Kyrie eleison," and the Collect. Terce, Sext, and None are to be recited

horarum, terni Psalmi, lectio, versus, "*Kyrie eleison*," et missæ sint. Si major congregatio fuerit, cum antiphonis dicantur; si vero minor, in directum psallantur.

Vespertina autem synaxis quatuor Psalmis cum antiphonis terminetur, post quos Psalmos lectio recitanda est, inde responsorium, ambrosianum, versus, canticum de Evangelio, Litaniæ et Oratio Dominica, et fiant missæ. Completorium autem trium Psalmorum dictione terminetur, qui Psalmi directanee et sine antiphona dicendi sunt. Post quos hymnus ejusdem horæ, lectio una, versus, "*Kyrie eleison*," et benedictio, et missæ fiant.

in the same way—that is, the verse, the hymn proper to each Hour, three Psalms, the lesson and versicle, "Kyrie eleison" with the Collect. If the community be large, let the Psalms be sung with antiphons; but if small, let them be sung straight forward.

Let the Vesper Office consist of four Psalms with antiphons; after the Psalms a lesson is to be recited; then a responsory, a hymn and versicle, the canticle from the Gospel, the Litany and Lord's Prayer, and finally the Collect. Let Compline consist of the recitation of three Psalms, to be said straight on without antiphons; then the hymn for that Hour, one lesson, the versicle, "Kyrie eleison," the blessing, and the Collect.

CHAPTER XVIII

IN WHAT ORDER THE PSALMS ARE TO BE SAID

Text.

In primis dicatur versus: "*Deus in adjutorium meum intende: Domine ad adjuvandum me festina*," et "*Gloria*." Inde hymnus uniuscujusque horæ. Deinde Prima hora, Dominica, dicenda sunt quatuor capitula Psalmi centesimi octavi decimi. Reliquis vero horis, id est, Tertia, Sexta, et Nona, terna capitula supradicti Psalmi centesimi octavi decimi dicantur. Ad Primam autem secundæ feriæ dicantur tres Psalmi, id est, primus, secundus, et sextus. Et ita per singulos dies ad Primam, usque ad Dominicam dicantur per ordinem terni Psalmi, usque ad nonumdecimum Psalmum; ita sane, ut nonus Psalmus et

First of all let this verse be said: "Deus in adjutorium meum intende: Domine ad adjuvandum me festina," and the "Gloria," followed by the hymn proper to each Hour. At Prime on Sunday four parts of the hundred and eighteenth Psalm are to be said. At the other Hours, that is, Terce, Sext, and None, let three parts of the same Psalm be said. At Prime on Monday let three Psalms be said, namely, the first, second, and sixth; and so in the same way every day until Sunday let three Psalms be said at Prime in order, up to the nineteenth; the ninth and the seventeenth, however, being divided into two

septimus decimus partiantur in binas "*Glorias.*" Et sic fiat, ut ad Vigilias Dominica semper a vigesimo incipiatur.

Ad Tertiam vero, et Sextam, et Nonam secundæ feriæ novem capitula, quæ residua sunt de centesimo decimo octavo Psalmo, ipsa terna capitula per easdem horas dicantur. Expenso igitur Psalmo centesimo octavo decimo duobus diebus, id est, Dominica et secunda feria, tertia feria jam ad Tertiam, Sextam, vel Nonam psallantur terni Psalmi, a centesimo nono decimo usque ad centesimum vigesimum septimum, id est, Psalmi novem. Quique Psalmi semper usque ad Dominicam per easdem horas itidem repetantur: Hymnorum nihilominus, lectionum vel versuum dispositione uniformi cunctis diebus servata, et ita scilicet, ut semper Dominica a centesimo octavo decimo incipiatur.

Vespera autem quotidie quatuor Psalmorum modulatione canatur. Qui Psalmi incipiantur a centesimo nono usque ad centesimum quadragesimum septimum: exceptis iis, qui in diversis horis ex eis sequestrantur, id est, a centesimo decimo septimo, usque ad centesimum vigesimum septimum, et centesimo trigesimo tertio, et centesimo quadragesimo secundo. Reliqui omnes in Vespera dicendi sunt. Et quia minus veniunt tres Psalmi, ideo dividendi sunt, qui in numero suprascripto fortiores inveniuntur: id est, centesimus trigesimus octavus, et centesimus quadragesimus tertius, et centesimus quadragesimus quartus. Centesimus vero sextus decimus, quia parvus est, cum centesimo quinto decimo conjungatur. Digesto ergo ordine Psalmorum Vespertinorum, reliqua, id est,

"Glorias." It will thus come about that at the Night Office on Sunday we shall always begin with the twentieth Psalm.

At Terce, Sext, and None on Monday are to be said the nine remaining parts of the hundred and eighteenth Psalm, three parts at each hour. This Psalm having thus been said through in two days—that is, Sunday and Monday—let the nine Psalms from the hundred and nineteenth to the hundred and twenty-second be said on Tuesday at Terce, Sext and None, three at each hour. And these Psalms are to be repeated at the same hours every day until Sunday; the arrangement, moreover, of hymns, lessons, and versicles remaining the same throughout, so as always to begin on Sunday from the hundred and eighteenth Psalm.

Vespers are to be sung every day with four Psalms. And let these begin from the hundred and ninth, and go on to the hundred and forty-seventh, omitting those of their number which are set apart for other hours—that is, from the hundred and seventeenth to the hundred and twenty-seventh, the hundred and thirty-third, and the hundred and forty-second. All the rest are to be said at Vespers. And as there are three Psalms wanting, let those of the aforesaid number, which are somewhat long, be divided—namely, the hundred and thirty-eighth, the hundred and forty-third, and the hundred and forty-fourth. But let the hundred and sixteenth, as it is short, be joined to the hundred and fifteenth. The order of the Psalms at Vespers being thus disposed, let the rest—that

lectiones, responsoria, hymni, versus, vel cantica, sicut supra taxavimus, impleantur. Ad Completorium vero quotidie tidem Psalmi repetantur; id est quartus, nonagesimus, et centesimus trigesimus tertius.

Disposito ordine Psalmodiæ diurnæ, reliqui omnes Psalmi, qui supersunt, æqualiter dividantur in septem noctium Vigilias, partiendo scilicet qui inter eos prolixiores sunt Psalmi, et duodecim per unamquamque constituantur noctem. Hoc præcipue commonentes, ut si cui forte hæc distributio Psalmorum displicuerit, ordinet, si melius aliter judicaverit, dum omnimodis id attendatur, ut omni hebdomada Psalterium ex integra numero centum quinquaginto Psalmorum psallatur, et Dominico die semper a capite repetatur ad Vigilias: quia nimis iners devotionis suæ servitium ostendunt Monachi, qui minus Psalterio, cum canticis consuetudinariis, per septimanæ circulum psallunt; cum legamus, sanctos Patres nostros uno die hoc strenue implevisse, quod nos tepidi utinam septimana integra persolvamus.

is, the lessons, responses, hymns, verses, and canticles—be said as already laid down. At Compline the same Psalms are to be repeated every day—namely, the fourth, ninetieth, and hundred and thirty-third.

The order of psalmody for the day-hours being now arranged, let all the remaining Psalms be equally distributed among the seven Night Offices, dividing the longer Psalms among them, and assigning twelve to each night. Above all, we recommend that if this arrangement of the Psalms be displeasing to anyone, he should, if he think fit, order it otherwise; taking care, in any case, that the whole Psalter of a hundred and fifty Psalms be recited every week, and always begun afresh at the Night Office on Sunday. For those monks would shew themselves very slothful in the Divine service who said in the course of a week less than the entire Psalter, with the usual canticles; since we read that our Holy Fathers resolutely performed in a single day what I pray we tepid monks may achieve in a whole week.

THESE chapters are very interesting, but are scarcely suitable for mental prayer. In them we have St. Benedict's arrangement of the Divine Office. The monks arose about 3 a.m. in winter, and 2 a.m. in summer. The "Vigiliæ," or Matins, were then said. "Matutinæ," or Lauds, commenced at daybreak, Prime at 6, Terce at 9, Sext at 12, None at 3, Vespers at 5, and the short office of Compline was said as a preparation for the night. It was

called Compline because it "completed" the daily service of praise. These times varied a little with the seasons. In this way the monk "gave praise to the Lord in the midst of the night," and "seven times in the day did he give praise to God."

The arrangement of the Divine Office in these chapters is the same as that found in the monastic Breviary of to-day. In Chapter XIII. we read: "The Office of Lauds and Vespers, however, must never conclude without the Lord's Prayer being said aloud by the Superior, so that all may hear it, on account of the thorns of scandal which are wont to arise; so that the brethren, by the covenant which they make in that prayer when they say "Forgive us as we forgive," may cleanse themselves of such faults. But at the other offices let the last part only of the prayer be said aloud, so that all may answer, "But deliver us from evil."

This gave the brethren a great lesson of charity at the beginning of the day and at its close. We may compare with this passage the seventy-first Instrument of Good Works, "To make peace with an adversary before the setting of the sun," and St. Paul's injunction, "Let not the sun go down on your anger." Our Holy Father has arranged the Psalter with great care to suit the duties of the day, and to give freshness, relish, and devotion to his monks, but his modesty and humility make him leave it to others to alter his arrangement if they think it would be better to do so. However, he insists that the whole Psalter must be said every week. "Above all," he says, "we recommend that if this arrange-

ment of the Psalms be displeasing to anyone, he should, if he think fit, order it otherwise, taking care in every case that the whole Psalter of a hundred and fifty Psalms be recited every week, and always begun afresh at the Night Office on Sunday. For those monks would show themselves very slothful in the Divine service who said in the course of a week less than the entire Psalter, with the usual canticles; since we read that our Holy Fathers resolutely performed in a single day what I pray we tepid monks may achieve in a whole week." Throughout these chapters we cannot but be struck by the fact that St. Benedict takes for granted that the Psalms are the true prayer of the monk. His closing words quoted above bespeak a deep love of the Psalms, and leave little doubt that he himself made constant use of them.

To the Benedictine they are the ordinary path to contemplation, as, indeed, they were not only to the monks of old, but to every Christian in the ages of faith. Let us, then, strive to understand them in order that we may love them, and use them all the days of our lives.

CHAPTER XIX

OF THE DISCIPLINE OF SAYING THE OFFICE

Text.

Ubique credimus divinam esse præsentiam, et oculos Domini in omni loco speculari bonos et malos: maxime tamen hoc sine aliqua dubitatione credimus, cum ad opus divinum assistimus. Ideo semper memores simus quod ait Propheta: "*Servite Domino in timore.*" Et iterum: "*Psallite sapienter.*" Et: "*In conspectu Angelorum psallam tibi.*" Ergo consideremus, qualiter oporteat nos in conspectu divinitatis et angelorum esse, et sic stemus ad psallendum, ut mens nostra concordet voci nostræ.

We believe that the Divine Presence is everywhere, and that the eyes of the Lord behold the good and the evil in every place. Especially should we believe this, without any doubt, when we are assisting at the work of God. Let us, then, ever remember what the Prophet saith: "Serve the Lord in fear"; and again: "Sing ye wisely"; and: "In the sight of the angels I will sing praises unto Thee." Therefore let us consider how we ought to behave ourselves in the presence of God and of His angels, and so assist at the Divine Office, that our mind and our voice may accord together.

Thoughts—I. *Opus Divinum.*

"THE sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me; and that is the way by which I will show him the salvation of God" (Ps. lix. 23). Prayer is the chief duty of a man, his highest activity, the main object of his creation. But the greater part of men cannot in any adequate way fulfil this duty of praise. The Church

has, therefore, organized this service of praise which is owed to God, and has set aside chosen souls as her representatives to perform this high duty for the whole Church. A religious should remember that though his lips say the words, though his mind and heart conceive holy thoughts and affections, yet his prayer is higher and more acceptable to God because he stands in the Divine Presence as the minister of the Church and the representative of the people. "The priest is a public official, and the mouthpiece of the whole Church" (St. Bernard, Sermon XX.).

Jesus Christ, according to His promise, is in the midst of the choir where so many are gathered together in His name. He is the Leader, and our littleness is joined to His greatness, our poverty to His riches, our weakness to His strength, our coldness to the fervour of His Sacred Heart, and God looks down not so much upon our weakness as upon "the Face of His Christ." The value of the praise which rises from an individual choir is also raised indefinitely by the fact that it forms a part of the great harmony of the universe. A religious may be encouraged by the thought that though his voice be weak, his mind often distracted and his heart cold, yet his prayer, feeble in itself, helps to swell that great hymn of praise which rises from the world to the God who made it. "Thus," says St. John Chrysostom, "small streams of water which would of themselves disappear join together to form a great river whose waters flow even to the ocean." In short, a religious is part of the choir, and the choir part of the public worship of the Church, and

the praise of the Church is joined to the infinite acts of worship rising from the Sacred Heart of the God-Man. Is it not, then, one of our chief privileges to praise God in the Divine Office? We have a truly angelic office, as St. Jerome says: "What the angels do in heaven, that the monks do on earth."

This united song of praise has risen from the Church to God from the earliest ages. She has many needs, and the cry of intercession ever rises from her lips to God. Our prayer is part of her prayer. We must not think merely of our own needs, but cry for help to God for the many needs of the Church and of souls, for sinners, for the faint-hearted, for the tempted, for the suffering in this world and in Purgatory. The Divine Office, when said in this way, becomes a great work of charity, an Apostolic work; we are engaged in saving sinners, helping pastors of souls, and extending the kingdom of Christ. For these reasons and many others we must be zealous for this "Opus Divinum." St. Benedict bequeathed to his children his own love for the "Opus Divinum." The choir of the monastery has ever been the centre of all spiritual activity.

It is well to realize that our performance of the Divine Office has an effect upon others. Others are sustained, aroused, and animated by the example of those who attend with ardour and humility. Such an example awakens the faith of the less fervent, recalls to them the presence of God, humbles them, and puts them to confusion for their laxity and coldness.

Prayer.

Ubique credimus divinam esse praesentiam; "servite . . . in timore." We believe, O my God, that Thou art everywhere. Thou beholdest the good and the evil of our lives.

May we ever stand before Thee with fear and reverence.

It is truly meet and just, right and salutary, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee;

Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Everlasting God.

"In conspectu angelorum." Therefore, with the angels and archangels, with the thrones and dominations, and with all the heavenly forces, we sing to Thee without ceasing a hymn of praise: "Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God of Hosts."

"Ah! dearly beloved, give heed to the presence of Christ, the guard of angels, the reverence due to the Sacrament and the relics of the Saints in whose sight you stand and sing Psalms. . . . Sign your hearts with the Sign of the Holy Cross: flee to the Passion of Christ; blush to think on other things than the words of God which you read and chant" (Thomas à Kempis, Sermon ad Nov. 1).

From the depths of her trial Thy Church cries to Thee, O God. Hear Thou her prayer!

May her daily prayers merit grace for sinners.

Strengthen Thou the faint-hearted. Save those who are tempted.

Give succour to all those in suffering; sanctify them by means of Thy Cross.

Put the fire from Thy Sacred Heart into the hearts of Thy priests. May Thy kingdom be extended.

For such and like blessings will I pray daily with Thy Church in the Office.

Thoughts—II. *Psallite Sapienter.*

After arranging the order and hours of the Divine Office, St. Benedict insists upon the interior dispositions which are necessary to make this "Divine work" pleasing to God. We must sing our Psalms with understanding. Let us consider how worthy of study the Psalms are. "Above the couch of David, according to Rabbinical tradition, there hung a harp. The midnight breeze, as it rippled over the strings, made such music that the Poet-King was constrained to rise from his bed, and till the dawn flushed the eastern skies he wedded words to the strains. The poetry of that tradition is condensed in the saying that the Book of Psalms contains the whole music of the heart of man, swept by the hand of his Maker. In it are gathered the lyrical burst of his tenderness, the moan of his penitence, the pathos of his sorrow, the triumph of his victory, the despair of his defeat, the firmness of his confidence, the rapture of his assured hope. In it is presented the anatomy of all parts of the human soul; in it, as Heine says, are collected 'sunrise and sunset, birth and death, promise and fulfilment—the whole drama of humanity.' In the Psalms is painted for all time, in fresh, unfading colours, the picture of

the moral warfare of man, often baffled, yet never wholly defeated, struggling upwards to all that is best and highest in his nature, always aware how short of the aim falls the attempt, how great is the gulf that severs the wish from its fulfilment. In them we do not find the innocent converse of man with God in the Garden of Eden; if we did, the book would for our fallen natures lose its value. On the contrary, it is the revelation of a soul deeply conscious of sin, seeking, in broken accents of shame and penitence and hope, to renew personal communion with God, heart to heart, thought to thought, face to face. It is this which gives to the Psalms their eternal truth. It is this which makes them at once the breviary and the viaticum of humanity. Here are gathered not only pregnant statements of the principles of religion, and condensed maxims of spiritual life, but a promptuary of effort, and manual of prayer and praise, and all this is clothed in language which is as rich in poetic beauty as it is universal and enduring in poetic truth" (Prothero, "Psalms in Human Life").

St. Augustine says: "In order that God may be worthily praised by men, God has praised Himself" (in Ps. cxliv. 1).

The Holy Ghost has inspired even the expressions we use; His words are upon our lips, His thoughts in our minds, and His sentiments and aspirations in our hearts. The language of the Psalms is from no mere human or even angelic voice; the accents are Divine. We may drink in light and life day by day from the very fountain of living waters which gush

forth from the Psalms and the inspired words of the Divine Office.

"The language of the Psalms is often far beyond the feelings of our soul, but we can repeat them frequently in faith and humility, and wait for the transformation they will assuredly effect" (Guéranger).

The breviary must not remain a sealed book to us. We must fear the reproach, "This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."

If we wish to sing to God with understanding, we should study the Psalms apart from the Office, until we can understand and appreciate them. We shall perform our daily duty of psalmody in the spirit which St. Benedict wishes when we "stand" to it, in God's presence, serving Him with fear, joining with the angels who are about us, and with mind and heart in accord.

Prayer.

Open, O Lord, my mouth to bless Thy Holy name.

Cleanse my heart from all vain, perverse, and alien thoughts.

Psallite sapienter. Enlighten my understanding; inflame my affections.

May I be able to recite the Divine Office worthily, attentively, and devoutly.

Worthily. How reverent must I be in Thy Holy Presence!

The light of Thy Presence is upon me.

The angelic hosts are about me.

How can I hope to praise Thee *worthily?*

At least I can avoid hurry and distractions.

My attitude before Thee can be reverential and humble.

This at least I will try to do, O my God.

Attentively. What beautiful words Thou dost put into my mouth!

Ut mens nostra concordet voci. May I ever try to rouse my mind to understand these Divine words.

Devoutly. Help me to make the sentiments of the Psalms my own.

Touch my heart; rouse me from sluggishness.

I am unworthy, but help me, dear Master!

"And looking on myself, I seemed not one
For such Man's love! More like an out-of-tune
Worn viol a good singer would be wrath
To spoil his song with; and which, snatched in haste,
Is laid down at the first ill-sounding note.
I did not wrong myself so, but I placed
A wrong on *Thee*. For perfect strains may float
'Neath master-hands from instruments defaced."

Ps. 33. "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be always in my mouth.

"O magnify the Lord with me, and let us extol His Name together.

"I sought the Lord, and He heard me; and He delivered me from all my troubles.

"Come ye to Him and be enlightened: and your faces shall not be confounded.

"O taste and see that the Lord is sweet: blessed is the man that hopeth in Him.

Servite Domino in timore.

"Fear the Lord, all ye His holy ones, for there is no want to them that fear Him.

"The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and he will save the humble of spirit."

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ON THE PSALMS.

"If we keep vigil in the church, David comes first, last, and midst. If early in the morning we seek for the melody of hymns, first, last, and midst is David again. If we are occupied with the funeral solemnities of the departed, if virgins sit at home and spin, David is first, last, and midst. A marvellous wonder! Many who have made but little progress in literature—nay, who have scarcely mastered its first principles—have the Psalter by heart. Nor is it in cities and churches alone that at all times, through every age, David is illustrious; in the midst of the forum, in the wilderness and uninhabitable land, he excites the praises of God. In monasteries, amongst those holy choirs of angelic armies, David is first, midst, and last. In the convents of virgins, where are the bands of them that imitate Mary; in the deserts, where are men crucified to the world and having their conversation with God, first, midst, and last he is. All other men at night are overpowered by sleep; David alone is active, and, congregating the servants of God into seraphic bands, turns earth into heaven, and converts men into angels."

CHAPTER XX

OF REVERENCE AT PRAYER

Text.

Si cum hominibus potentibus volumus aliqua suggerere, non præsumimus, nisi cum humilitate, et reverentia: quanto magis Domino Deo universorum cum omni humilitate, et puritatis devotione supplicandum est? Et non in multiloquio, sed in puritate cordis, et compunctione lacrymarum nos exaudiri sciamus. Et ideo brevis debet esse et pura oratio; nisi forte ex affectu inspirationis divinæ gratiæ protendatur. In conventu tamen omnino brevietur oratio, et facto signo a Priore, omnes pariter surgant.

If, when we wish to make any request to men in power, we presume not to do so except with humility and reverence, how much more ought we with all lowliness and purity of devotion to offer our supplications to the Lord God of all things? And let us remember that not for our much speaking, but for our purity of heart and tears of compunction shall we be heard. Our prayer, therefore, ought to be short and pure, except it be perchance prolonged by the inspiration of Divine Grace. But let prayer made in common always be short; and at the signal given by the Superior, let all rise together.

Thoughts.

ST. BENEDICT is speaking here of prayer in general, and not of the "Opus Dei."

Let us consider (*a*) the need of frequent prayer, (*b*) what we must do to become men of prayer, and (*c*) how to pray.

a)) *The need of frequent prayer.*

1. The end and work of the religious life consists in loving God and avoiding evil.

2. Progress in the religious life consists in loving God more and more, and avoiding evil more and more.

3. Love of God and avoidance of evil consists in turning our will to God and away from evil; for the will controls and directs the other powers of soul and body.

4. Progress in the religious life, therefore, means directing our will more and more *strongly*, *readily*, and *persistently* towards God and against evil.

5. As our limbs can only be made strong and active by exercise, so our wills can only be made strong and active by exercise.

6. Prayer does for the will what exercise does for the body: it practises it in loving God and hating evil.

7. As the limbs without exercise grow weak and stiff, so the will without prayer grows sluggish and inert.

8. Progress in the spiritual life, as has been said, means progress in strength and activity of *will*; therefore progress in the spiritual life chiefly means progress in *prayer*. Prayer is the *great duty*, then, of the religious.

9. As our will is continually being drawn in the wrong direction by self-love, sloth, and created things, it can only be kept right by continual exercise in the right direction. Prayer, then, must be *frequent*.

(*b*) *How to become men of prayer.*

If a religious wishes to become a man of prayer, he must do more than say the prayers appointed by Rule; he must practise recollection, or, as it is termed, "introversion." This consists in trying to carry out, as far as possible, the injunction to "pray always." St. Benedict says, in Chapter VII.: "Let him consider that he is always beheld from heaven by God, and that his actions are everywhere seen by the eye of the Divine Majesty." This remembrance of God must not be a picture in the imagination, or a straining after One Who is afar off. Blosius says ("Spiritual Instruction," c. iii.): "The servant of God must believe without doubt that the invisible God is near him—nay, within him. . . . Often should he repeat such words as these within himself: 'The Lord is here; the Lord sees me.'" St. Theresa points out ("Way of Perfection," c. xxviii., xxix.) that it is of the utmost importance to bear in mind that our Lord is within us, and that we ought to strive to be there with Him. "Consider," she says, "the words of St. Augustine, that He sought God in many places, and found Him at last within himself." We enter this precious dwelling by recollection and prayer. She describes how the soul is a palace of surpassing splendour where the Great King resides upon the throne of the heart. We must not allow intruders into this interior palace, but must keep it for the King. He asks this, and He will never give Himself entirely to us until we have given ourselves entirely to Him. All that is required is to place ourselves in solitude, and to look at Him within

ourselves; to collect our external senses together, and to occupy them within. We need never be separated from His sweet company. Our Lord, she says, teaches a soul far more quickly by this method than by any other. "For my part, I, Theresa, acknowledge that I never knew what it was to pray with satisfaction till our Lord taught me this method." Try it, she insists, for six months, and you will see what immense good you derive from it. St. Paul says (Acts xvii. 27, 28): "We should seek after God and find Him, although He is not far from every one of us; for in Him we live, we move, we are."

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

Seneca writes to Lucilius: "Our hands should not be lifted up to heaven, nor our voice addressed to the image in the temple as though its ears could hear us better. No! God is at thy side, is with thee and within thee. I tell thee, Lucilius, that the Sacred Spirit sits within us, observing and keeping guard over all our actions, good and bad." St. Augustine says: "A great misery this, for a man not to be with Him, Whom he cannot be without. For since man is in Him, he cannot be without Him." St. Catherine of Siena is said to have built a secret cell in her heart, and there dwelt continually with God.

(*c*) *The next point to be considered is how to pray.*

St. Benedict says: "And let us remember that not for our much speaking, but for our purity of heart and tears of compunction, shall we be heard. Our prayer, therefore, ought to be short and pure,

except it be perchance prolonged by the inspiration of Divine Grace." He gives as the 57th Instrument of good works: "To apply oneself frequently to prayer." This teaching that prayer should be short, frequent, and intense, is common to all the older spiritual writers, and is the tradition which comes down from the Fathers of the Desert. Cassian says of the Eastern monks: "They consider short but very frequent prayers to be most profitable"; and in his conferences he says: "Our prayers should be frequent but short, lest in prolonging them the enemy should be able to lay an ambush for us and slip something into our hearts." St. Augustine, in a letter to Probus, says: "The brethren in Egypt are said to make frequent prayers, but exceedingly short. They, in a manner, dart them off by snatches, lest their attention should fail and grow dull by longer delays: for a wakeful, aroused attention is very necessary for one who prays."

Blosius says ("Spiritual Instruction," c. v.): "The diligent darting forth of aspirations and prayers of ejaculation and fervent desires to God, joined with true mortification and self-denial, is the most certain as well as the shortest way by which a soul can easily and quickly come to perfection."

With regard to mental prayer, St. Catherine of Siena recommends that beginners especially should learn how to pray by using, during the time of mental prayer, ejaculations which they should repeat and utter fervently as frequently as possible, and by this means turn by degrees even the meditation into prayer. In this way we can make our prayer "short

and pure." When St. Benedict recommends us to make our prayer "short," he is warning us against "too much speaking"—against long and formal set prayers. The value of prayer does not depend upon its length, but upon its devotion. We may pray for a long time, as we do each morning, and yet our prayers may be made short and pure by earnest aspirations and ejaculations. Some spiritual writers recommend that a religious should learn certain aspirations which suit his present needs. The Psalms are the great storehouse from which he may draw them. Excellent lists of ejaculations may also be found in Cardinal Bona's "Easy Way to God," Blosius' "Spiritual Instruction," and Father Baker's "Sancta Sophia." These ejaculations must not be used as mere vocal prayers, but they must be dwelt upon, said slowly, repeated, and their hidden sweetness drawn forth. Meditation is necessary to impress the truths upon the soul, but the meditation must not remain mere dry thought; it must be vivified by fervent aspiration and ejaculation—"as sparks among the dry reeds," "my heart grew hot within me, and in my meditation a fire shall flame out" (Ps. xxxviii. 4). This prayer of ejaculation will be of great use in the time of vocal prayer also. We shall be attuned to the sacred melody of the Psalms, and the Psalmist will strike from our souls, as from his harp, notes of contrition or of joy, of praise, thanksgiving, humility and love; and thus we shall fulfil that injunction of St. Augustine: "If the Psalm prays, do you pray; if it groans, do you groan; if it rejoices, rejoice; if it hopes, hope; and if it

fears, fear" (on Ps. xxv. 3). The Divine Office will become one stream of fervent ejaculation to one who has learnt to pray as the ancient Fathers teach. St. Benedict tells us also how we ought to stand before God. We must be filled with the spirit of compunction and with a sense of our nothingness, and consequently of the absolute need of prayer; but also with a sense of confidence, because God is the great Lord of all, and is able and willing to help us.

Prayer.

"He knows how to live rightly who knows how to pray rightly" (St. Augustine).

Ecclus. xxxvi. 21. "The prayer of him that humbleth himself shall pierce the clouds."

Cum omni humilitate et compunctione lacrymarum. I humble myself before Thee, O my God. My sins are many; fill me with the spirit of compunction.

I will ever regret with great sorrow my many offences against Thee.

Fill me with fear of Thy judgments; give me courage to pass my days in the spirit of penance, fleeing from all levity and thoughtlessness.

Nothing will so raise my mind from earth to heaven;

Nothing will so quickly put to death the desires of the flesh;

Nothing will bring such light to my mind and strength to my will as pure prayer to Thee, O my God.

"Wheresoever thou art, pray. Do not seek a

place to pray in, for thou art a temple, and God is ever with thee" (St. John Chrysostom).

Grant, O good Jesus, that as Thou art in the Father, and the Father in Thee, so I may be one with Thee and never separated from Thee.

A life of humble, devout prayer will appease Thy anger, O my God; it will obtain pardon for my sins; will still the storms of temptation, and expel vicious inclinations from my heart. Thy grace will be given to me; my soul will be inflamed with love of Thee, and earthly pleasures will lose their charm.

Puritatis devotione.

"With all lowliness and purity of devotion I will offer my supplications to Thee, O Lord God of all things."

"With purity of heart and tears of compunction" will I pray to Thee, and Thou wilt hear me.

"Lord, teach me how to pray."

I will speak to my Lord, whereas I am but dust and ashes.

The subject speaks to his King; the little to the Great; the selfish to the All-generous.

With awe and reverence do I approach Thee.

Whom should I love to be with, but with Thee, my Friend, my Saviour?

Shame for the monk who has chosen Christ, to grudge intercourse with Christ!

I am Thine! Thou art mine!

Of what use is my obedience unless I lay it at Thy feet, for the end and motive of my obedience is subjection to Thee?

Of what value is my poverty unless I offer Thee

my love, since for this end alone have I given up all things?

Never am I more truly a monk than when praying to Thee.

Lord, keep me with Thee at all times.

Save me from distraction and selfishness.

Lord Jesus, teach me how to pray.

CHAPTER XXI

OF THE DEANS OF THE MONASTERY

Text.

Si major fuerit congregatio, eligantur de ipsis fratres boni testimonii et sanctæ conversationis, et constituantur Decani: qui sollicitudinem gerant super decanias suas in omnibus, secundum mandata Dei et præcepta Abbatis sui. Qui Decani tales eligantur, in quibus securus Abbas partiatur onera sua, et non eligantur per ordinem, sed secundum vitæ meritum, et sapientiæ doctrinam. Quod si quis ex eis aliqua forte inflatus superbia repertus fuerit reprehensibilis; correptus semel, et iterum, et tertio, si emendare noluerit, dejiciatur, et alter in loco ejus, qui dignus est, subrogetur. Et de Præposito eadem constituimus.

Should the community be large, let there be chosen from it certain brethren of good repute and holy life, and appointed Deans. Let them carefully direct their deaneries in all things according to the commandments of God and the will of their Abbot. And let such men be chosen Deans as the Abbot may safely trust to share his burdens; let them not be chosen according to order, but for the merit of their lives and for their wisdom and learning. And should any one of them, being puffed up with pride, be found worthy of blame, and after being thrice corrected, refuse to amend, let him be deposed, and one more worthy put in his place. And we order the same to be done with regard to the Provost.

Thoughts.

ST. BENEDICT has treated of the interior life, and now he treats of the external government of the monastery.

If the community is large, the Abbot alone cannot

give that personal care and attention to individuals which St. Benedict would like them to receive. Let him, then, choose the most suitable members of his community to help him. But, as Martène points out, though the Abbot has delegated to others certain duties, yet his authority does not cease—"debet partiri non deponere"—and the ultimate responsibility both in temporals and spirituals rests upon him.

The Deans must be "of good repute and holy life." They must be men whom the brethren look up to and respect, and of such holiness of life as to lead and influence others. Words alone have no power to win hearts; they must be backed by the ethical proof of the teacher's personal virtue—"qui domui suæ præesse nescit, quomodo Ecclesiæ Dei diligentiam habebit?"

They must be full of zeal for their deaneries, leading their subjects to good observance both by word and example.

They must carry out their duties "according to the commandments of God and the will of their Abbot."

A principle is laid down here to guide officials in their administration. They must look first to the law of God Whom they represent, and then to the Abbot's will. Our Holy Father insists strongly in many passages on entire subordination to the direction of the Abbot.

The Deans must not be chosen because of their age or order in the community, but for "the merit of their lives and for their wisdom and learning."

Piety of life is not enough without learning, nor is learning enough without piety. For true guidance of souls both theory and practice are necessary; there must be both the knowledge and practice of ascetics.

In Chapter II. the Abbot is told that the hard-hearted and unlearned can only be influenced by the example of his own sanctity of life, and that the intelligent must find in him a skilled master. This two-fold teaching is necessary for all who have charge of others. "No man can safely speak but he who loves silence; no man can safely be a Superior but he who loves to be in subjection" ("Imitation of Christ").

Though the office of Dean has in many monasteries ceased, yet this chapter lays down principles which apply to the officials who share the Abbot's burden —*e.g.*, the Prior, Sub-prior, Junior Master, etc.

Prayer.

(For those in authority over others.)

I must beware, O my God, lest at any time Thou say to me: "Why dost thou declare My justice and take My Covenant in thy mouth? Thou hast hated discipline, and hast cast My words behind thy back."

Ps. xlix. 16, 17.

If I am unworthy of my office of teacher, whilst I preach good things to others, I but heap evils on my own head.

"The kingdom of heaven is not in speech, but in power."

1 Cor. iv.

Boni testimonii; sanctæ conversationis. Secundum vitæ meritum.

The example of a good life is more needed than teaching.

The silence of a holy man does more good than many words from a careless man.

If I would be Thy true disciple, O my Jesus, I must not only teach to others, but must practise what Thou hast enjoined.

Sapientiæ doctrinam.

If I love Thee, O Thou Good Shepherd, I must obey Thy command, "Feed My sheep."

May I lead them to the pleasant pastures and to the waters of refreshment.

"The shepherd who loves God, feeds his sheep by his words, his example, and his care; by words of consolation, by the example of his life, and by the assistance of his help" (St. Bonaventure).

Inflatis superbia.

There is a danger, O my God, that I may be puffed up by pride. Save me from an independent spirit.

Secundum mandata.

I must cherish the spirit of obedience if I wish to be worthy to rule.

Dei et præcepta Abbatis.

Give me, O my God, humility of mind and a submissive will.

Then only shall I be fit to rule when I love to obey.

CHAPTER XXII

HOW THE MONKS ARE TO SLEEP

Text.

Singuli per singulos lectos dormiant. Lectisternia pro modo conversationis, secundum dispensationem Abbatis sui, singuli accipiant. Si potest fieri, omnes in uno loco dormiant: si autem multitudo non sinit, deni, aut viceni cum senioribus suis, qui super eos solliciti sint, pausent. Candela jugiter in eadem cella ardeat usque mane.

Vestiti dormiant, et cincti cingulis aut funibus, et cultellos ad latus non habeant dum dormiunt, ne forte per somnium vulnerentur dormientes: et ut parati sint monachi semper; et facto signo absque mora surgentes, festinent invicem se prævenire ad opus Dei, cum omni tamen gravitate, et modestia. Adolescentiores fratres juxta se non habeant lectos, sed permixti cum senioribus. Surgentes vero ad Opus Dei, invicem se moderate cohortentur, propter somnolentorum excusationes.

Let them sleep each one in a separate bed, receiving bedding suitable to their manner of life, as the Abbot shall appoint. If possible, let all sleep in one place; but if the number do not permit of this, let them repose by tens or twenties with the seniors who have charge of them. Let a candle burn constantly in the cell until morning.

Let them sleep clothed and girded with belts or cords—but not with knives at their sides, lest perchance they wound themselves in their sleep—and thus be always ready, so that when the signal is given they may rise without delay, and hasten each to forestall the other in going to the work of God, yet with all gravity and modesty. Let not the younger brethren have their beds by themselves, but among those of the seniors. And when they rise for the work of God, let them gently encourage one another, because of the excuses of the drowsy.

Thoughts.

THE regulations found in this chapter are to safeguard the modesty of the monks and their alacrity in the Divine service. Even in their sleep they must be ready for the Lord's work, mindful of the words: "Let your loins be girt, and lamps burning in your hands." We must so sleep as to be ready when we are called for prayer. Our performance of the "Opus Dei" depends much on that spirit of mortification which makes us ever eager to overcome ourselves in order to serve God, and on that spirit of recollection which feeds the fires of devotion within the heart. Our solicitude for the work of God will be shown by our promptness in rising and in getting to choir. The body will make "drowsy excuses," but the soul must encourage it by holy thoughts and desires. Energy in rising and dressing and recollection of mind will help us to come to the Divine Office with that zeal, seriousness, and modesty which are characteristic of a fervent soul. St. Basil (in "Regula Brevis," 43) asks how one ought to attend to the call of prayer, and replies: "If one recognizes the loss he suffers from sleep, inasmuch as his soul is not conscious, and understands the profit of watching, and especially the glorious privilege it is to approach to God by prayer, he will listen to him who rouses him to pray as to one who confers upon him benefits not only great, but surpassing all desire."

Again he asks (*ibid.*, 44): "What if he who is called be saddened or angered thereby?" He answers: "Let him be punished by solitude and

fasting, if so he may be touched with compunction, and may come to know of how many and how great blessings he in his stupidity robs himself, and so amending, recover his cheerfulness, being possessed of the same blessing as he was who said: "I remembered God, and was delighted" (Ps. lxxvi. 4).

Prayer.

Candela in cella ardeat.

"The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us" (Ps. 4).
May it shine even through the darkness of the night and of my sleep.

Te lucis ante terminum.

Now that the daylight fades away,
By all Thy grace and love,
Thee, Maker of the world, we pray
To watch our bed above.

Let dreams depart and phantoms fly,
The offspring of the night;
Keep us like shrines beneath Thine eye,
Pure in our foes' despite.

This grace on Thy redeemed confer,
Father, Coequal Son,
And Holy Ghost, the Comforter,
Eternal Three in One. Amen.

Compline Hymn
(translated by Cardinal Newman).

Parati sint.

A monk must be always ready for Thy work, O my God.
Even at night he must be clothed and girded in spirit, so that when Thou dost

call to him, he may rise with the word of thanksgiving on his lips.

For once more he is allowed to sing Thy praises with the holy angels.

One more day has been granted to him to work for Thee. Gird Thou my spirit!

Festinent se prævenire ad opus Dei.

I will serve Thee, O my God, with joyful alacrity.

Help me to overcome the reluctance of my slothful body.

CHAPTER XXIII

OF EXCOMMUNICATION FOR OFFENCES

Text.

Si quis frater contumax, aut inobediens, aut superbus, aut murmurans, vel in aliquo contrarius existens sanctæ Regulæ, et præceptis seniorum suorum contemptor repertus fuerit; hic secundum Domini nostri præceptum admoneatur semel, et secundo secrete a senioribus suis. Si non emendaverit, objurgetur publice coram omnibus. Si vero neque sic correxerit, si intelligit, qualis pœna sit, excommunicationi subjaceat. Sin autem improbus est, vindictæ corporali subdatur.

If any brother is found contumacious or disobedient, or proud, or a murmurer, or in any way transgressing the Holy Rule, and contemning the orders of his seniors, let him, according to our Lord's commandment, be once or twice privately admonished by his elders. If he do not amend, let him be rebuked in public before all. But if even then he do not correct himself, let him be subjected to excommunication, provided that he understand the nature of the punishment. Should he, however, prove incorrigible, let him undergo corporal chastisement.

Thoughts.

ST. BENEDICT wishes a Superior to be kind, but not weak. In any monastery, however strict the observance, there are sure to be offenders, and it is the Superior's difficult duty to correct and punish them. St. Bonaventure points out that the difference between monasteries of good and lax observance

does not lie in this, that all the members of the one are perfect, and of the other are imperfect, but in this, that offenders in a strict monastery are corrected at once, and if incorrigible are expelled, whilst in a lax monastery faults are overlooked.

"No monastery should be declared badly ordered if inordinate acts are found there, but only if, when found, they are not zealously corrected" (Abeëlard, Ep. 8).

A Superior does not merit the name of discreet and kind if the reason why he refrains from correcting is that he fears to offend a subject who has transgressed, or to render himself unpopular. St. Jerome says: "What is this mercy and this kindness, to spare one and to endanger all the others? for one offender will affect the rest as one diseased sheep will contaminate the whole flock."

The Superior must show the rigour of a Father, never countenancing sin to the detriment of his community, of the sinner, and of his own soul. Everyone who holds authority over others has need of great courage and discretion to act firmly and yet sweetly, without passion and from a holy zeal. If a brother is contumacious, disobedient, proud, a murmurer, a transgressor of the Rule, or if he shows contempt for the orders of Superiors, he is to be admonished once or twice privately. If he do not amend, he is to be publicly corrected. If he does not even then correct himself, he is to be excommunicated, or receive corporal punishment.

Contumacious—i.e., if he obstinately disobeys, is insolent, and rebellious.

Murmurers.—These are very severely condemned in Chapter XXXIV., where we will consider this fault.

Contempt. — "One sins through contempt when one's will refuses to submit to law or rule, and acts from this motive against law or rule. It is not contempt when the transgression is from another cause —*e.g.*, from concupiscence or anger, even if he sins frequently from this cause" (St. Thomas, II.: II., qu. 186, art. 9 ad 3).

Prayer.

Luke xvi. 10. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater."

Ecclus. xix. 1. "He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little."

Thou, my Saviour, didst carry to Calvary the burden of our sins.

Give me some share of Thy Divine patience and magnanimity, that I may bear the weaknesses and failings of those committed to my charge.

The duty of the shepherd of souls is to give his life for his sheep.

Si quis frater contemptor repertus.

Make me brave, loving, and firm in my admonitions.

Admoneatur. "Brethren, and if any man be overtaken in any fault, you, who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. vi. 1, 2).

Thy community, O my God, is as Thy temple.

Nothing defiled must be allowed to enter.

May I love Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth!

Objurgetur, etc. "Where the least excesses are neglected, there the whole order is by degrees destroyed. . . . It is most certain that in a monastery where the small points of discipline are enforced, there the strictness of the monastic life will endure, and there peace will reign amongst the brethren" (St. Anselm).

"Because I desire to see you like angels, again and again I ask, and in the name of the Omnipotent God beseech you not to permit even the least point of the Rule to be thought little of, but labour with all your strength, backed by God's help, to safeguard it" (St. Cæsarius of Arles).

Give me, O my God, strength of character, warmth of love, and undying zeal, that the walls of Sion may be built and strengthened.

Monastic discipline is the enclosure of the Holy Place where Thy glory dwelleth.

NOTE.—The following chapters have not been arranged for Mental Prayer because they are unsuitable for this purpose. They contain the punishments to be inflicted for faults:

Chapter XXIV.: What the Measure of Excommunication Should Be.

Chapter XXV.: Of Graver Faults.

Chapter XXVI.: Of Those Who, without Leave of the Abbot, Consort with the Excommunicate.

Chapter XXVIII.: Of Those Who, being often Corrected, do not Amend.

Chapter XXIX.: Whether the Brethren who Leave the Monastery are to be Received Again.

CHAPTER XXIV

WHAT THE MEASURE OF EXCOMMUNICATION SHOULD BE

Text.

Secundum modum culpæ, excommunicationis, vel disciplinæ debet extendi mensura: qui culparum modus in Abbatis pendeat judicio. Si quis tamen frater in levioribus culpis invenitur, tantum a mensæ participatione privetur. Privati autem a mensæ consortio, ista erit ratio: ut in Oratorio Psalmum, aut antiphonam non imponat, neque lectionem recitet, usque ad satisfactionem. Refectionem autem cibi post fratrum refectionem solus accipiat; ut si verbi gratia fratres reficiunt sexta hora, ille frater nona; si fratres nona, ille vespertina; usque dum satisfactione congrua veniam consequatur.

The measure of excommunication or chastisement should be meted out according to the gravity of the offence, the estimation of which shall be left to the judgment of the Abbot. If any brother be found guilty of lighter faults, let him be excluded from the common table. And this shall be the rule for one so deprived: he shall intone neither Psalm nor antiphon in the Oratory, nor shall he read a lesson, until he have made satisfaction. Let him take his meals alone, after those of the brethren, so that if, for example, the brethren eat at the sixth hour, let him eat at the ninth; if they eat at the ninth, let him eat in the evening, until by proper satisfaction he obtain pardon.

CHAPTER XXV

OF GRAVER FAULTS

Text.

Si frater, qui gravioris culpæ noxa tenetur, suspendatur a mensa simul et ab Oratorio.

Let that brother who is found guilty of a more grievous offence be excluded both from the table

Nullus ei fratrum in ullo jungatur consortio, neque in colloquio. Solus sit ad opus sibi injunctum, persistens in pœnitentiæ luctu, sciens illam terribilem Apostoli sententiam dicentis: traditum hujusmodi hominem Satanæ in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus sit in die Domini. Cibi autem refectionem solus percipiat, mensura vel hora qua præviderit ei Abbas competere: nec a quoquam benedicatur transeunte, nec cibus, qui ei datur.

and from the Oratory, and let none of the brethren consort with him or speak to him. Let him be alone at the work enjoined him, and continue in penance and sorrow, remembering that dreadful sentence of the Apostle, "that such a one is delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord." Let him take his portion of food alone, in the measure and at the time that the Abbot shall think best for him. Let none of those who pass by bless him, nor the food that is given him.

CHAPTER XXVI

OF THOSE WHO, WITHOUT LEAVE OF THE ABBOT, CONSORT WITH THE EXCOMMUNICATE

Text.

Si quis frater præsumpserit sine jussione Abbatis, fratri excommunicato quolibet modo se jungere, aut loqui cum eo, vel mandatum ei dirigere, similem sortiatur excommunicationis vindictam.

If any brother presume, without the Abbot's leave, to hold any intercourse whatever with an excommunicated brother, or to speak to him, or to send him a message, let him incur the same punishment of excommunication.

CHAPTER XXVII

HOW CAREFUL THE ABBOT SHOULD BE OF THE EXCOMMUNICATE

Text.

Omni sollicitudine curam gerat Abbas circa delinquentes fratres: quia "*non est opus sanis medicus, sed male habentibus.*" Et ideo uti debet omni modo ut sapiens medicus: immittere quasi occultos consolatores sympæctas, id est, seniores sapientes fratres, qui quasi secrete consolentur fratrem fluctuantem, et provocent eum ad humilitatis satisfactionem, et consolentur eum, ne abundantiori tristitia absorbeatur; sed sicut ait Apostolus: "*Confirmetur in eo charitas, et oretur pro eo ab omnibus.*"

Magnopere enim debet sollicitudinem gerere Abbas, et omni sagacitate et industria curare, ne aliquam de ovibus sibi creditis perdat. Noverit enim se infirmarum curam suscepisse animarum, non super sanas tyrannidem: et metuat Prophetæ comminationem, per quem dicit Deus: "*Quod crassum videbatis, assumebatis: et quod debile erat, projiciebatis.*" Et Pastoris boni pium imitetur exemplum, qui relictis nonaginta novem ovibus in montibus, abiit unam ovem, quæ erraverat, quærere; cujus

Let the Abbot show all care and solicitude towards the offending brethren, for "they that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick." To which end he ought, as a wise physician, to use every means in his power, sending some brethren of mature years and wisdom, who may, as it were secretly, console the wavering brother, and induce him to make humble satisfaction. Let them comfort him, that he be not overwhelmed by excess of sorrow; but as the Apostle saith, "Let charity be strengthened towards him," and let all pray for him. For the Abbot is bound to use the greatest care, and to strive with all prudence and zeal not to lose any one of the sheep committed to him. He must know that he hath undertaken the charge of weakly souls, and not a tyranny over the strong; and let him fear the threat of the Prophet, wherein God saith: "What ye saw to be fat, that ye took to yourselves, and what was diseased ye cast away." Let him imitate the

infirmitati in tantum compassus est, ut eam in sacris humeris suis dignaretur imponere, et sic reportare ad gregem."

loving example of the Good Shepherd, who, leaving the ninety and nine sheep on the mountains, went to seek one which had gone astray, on whose weakness he had such compassion that He vouchsafed to lay it on His own sacred shoulders, and thus bring it back to the flock.

Thoughts.

We have put before us in this chapter a beautiful picture of charity. An offender is not a person to be disliked, avoided, and got rid of, but charity must be "strengthened towards him." A Superior does not undertake the care of strong and perfect souls, but of weak and frail. It is selfishness, and an anxiety to avoid what is unpleasant, "to cast away the diseased." "Consider," says St. Bernard, "that thou art the equal, friend, and companion of those who run quickly on the road to perfection; but you are the Abbot, Father, physician to those who are weak, unquiet, and murmurers. You perform your office if you console and exhort such souls, bear their burdens, and heal them." A good shepherd shows more care for the infirm than for those who are well; he must seem even to neglect the good in order to follow the wanderers and bring them back to the fold. He must strike the sinner if it is necessary to save his soul from death; but he must strike with love in his heart, and impelled by the desire to heal. Without weakening his authority, the Superior should try to make the offender take his punishment in the

proper spirit. St. Benedict recommends that one of the elder Fathers should show him all kindness and friendship, persuade him to make humble satisfaction, and pray for him that God, Who is the Master of all hearts, may change his heart. The brethren also must pray for one who is in trouble.

Prayer.

Thou art, O Jesus, the Good Samaritan; ever ready to pour oil and wine into our wounds.

Omni sollicitudine gerat Abbas circa delinquentes.

Thou hast joined me to Thyself in this work of charity.

"They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

"God commendeth His charity to us; because when as yet we were sinners . . . Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8).

Fill me with a like charity; make me ready to give all labour, and even my life, for sinners.

Confirmetur charitas.

May our charity be strengthened towards those who are sinful and proud of heart.

Oretur ab omnibus.

Our prayers must ascend perseveringly and hopefully to Thee, the Giver of grace.

Every influence must be brought to aid them; the old and gentle must try to soften and cheer them.

Seniores sapientes.

Give to all of us hearts full of loving charity; banish from us the spirit of tyranny and compulsion.

Non tyrannidem.

"God sent not His Son into the world to judge

the world, but that the world may be saved by Him" (John iii. 17).

My work in the world is not to condemn and reject, but to seek and to save.

Ne aliquam de ovibus perdat. Give me prudence and zeal, that I lose not one of the sheep committed to me.

Pastoris boni imitetur exemplum. May I be a good shepherd, ever seeking the wanderers, and full of compassion, bearing them back to Thee on my shoulders.

CHAPTER XXVIII

OF THOSE WHO, BEING OFTEN CORRECTED, DO NOT AMEND

Text.

Si quis frater frequenter correptus pro qualibet culpa, si etiam excommunicatus non emendaverit, acrior ei accedat correctio, id est, ut verberum vindicta in eum procedat. Quod si nec ita se correxerit, aut forte (quod absit) in superbiam elatus etiam defendere voluerit opera sua, tunc Abbas faciat quod sapiens medicus: si exhibuit fomenta, si unguenta adhortationum, si medicamina Scripturarum divinarum, si ad ultimum ustionem excommunicationis, vel plagas virgarum, et jam si viderit nihil suam prævalere industriam; adhibeat etiam (quod majus est) suam et omnium fratrum pro eo orationem, ut Dominus, qui omnia potest, operetur salutem circa infirmum fratrem. Quod si nec isto modo sanatus fuerit, tunc jam utatur Abbas ferro abscissionis, ut ait Apostolus: "*Auferte malum ex vobis.*" Et iterum: "*Infidelis si discedit, discedat*": ne una ovis morbida omnem gregem contaminet.

If any brother who has been frequently corrected for some fault, or even excommunicated, do not amend, let a more severe chastisement be applied — that is, let the punishment of stripes be administered to him. But if even then he do not correct himself, or perchance (which God forbid), puffed up with pride, even wish to defend his deeds, then let the Abbot act like a wise physician. If he hath applied fomentations and the unction of his admonitions, the medicine of the Holy Scriptures, and the last remedy of excommunication or corporal chastisement, and if he see that his labours are of no avail, let him add what is still more powerful —his own prayers and those of all the brethren for him, that God, Who is all-powerful, may work the cure of the sick brother. But if he be not healed even by this means, then at length let the Abbot use the sword of separation, as the Apostle saith: "Put away the evil one from you." And again: "If the faithless one depart, let him depart," lest one diseased sheep should taint the whole flock.

CHAPTER XXIX

WHETHER THE BRETHREN WHO LEAVE THE MONASTERY ARE TO BE RECEIVED AGAIN

Text.

Frater, qui proprio vitio egreditur, aut projicitur de monasterio, si reverti voluerit, spondeat prius omnem emendationem vitii pro quo egressus est, et sic in ultimo gradu recipiatur, ut ex hoc ejus humilitas comprobetur. Quod si denuo exierit, usque tertio recipiatur. Jam vero postea sciat, omnem sibi reversionis aditum denegari.

If any brother, who through his own fault departeth or is cast out of the monastery, be willing to return, let him first undertake to amend entirely the fault for which he went away; and then let him be received back into the lowest place, that thus his humility may be tried. Should he again depart, let him be taken back until the third time, knowing that after this all return will be denied him.

CHAPTER XXX

HOW THE YOUNGER BOYS ARE TO BE CORRECTED

Text.

Omnis ætas vel intellectus proprias debet habere mensuras. Ideoque quoties pueri, vel adolescentiores ætate, aut qui minus intelligere possunt, quanta pœna sit excommunicationis, hi tales dum delinquunt, aut jejuniis nimiis affligantur, aut acribus verberibus coerceantur, ut sanentur.

Every age and understanding should have its proper measure of discipline. As often, therefore, as boys, or others under age, or unable to understand the greatness of the penalty of excommunication, commit faults, let them be punished by severe fasting or sharp stripes, in order that they may be cured.

Thoughts.

THE education and training of the young has always had a marked place in Benedictine life. Boys should receive more in monastic schools than mere secular learning. They should be influenced by the surroundings of the cloister, and by the personal characters of the monks under whose care they are placed. A monk is supposed to have a special influence arising from his religious character. If he practises self-discipline in all its forms, if he has acquired gravity, strength, and steadiness by regular prayer and mortification, he will win, first of all, the

respect of the young; and if he is at the same time charitable, gentle, and patient, he will win their affection also. The monk should have the strength which comes from self-conquest, and the sweetness which comes from the love of God.

These qualities of firmness and kindness are mentioned in Chapters XXXVII. and LXX.: "Let the children be kept by all under diligent and watchful discipline"; and "as human nature is drawn to feel pity for this age, let their weakness be taken into account."

If a religious is wanting in these characteristic virtues of his state, he will probably do more harm than good by his intercourse with the young. There will be weakness of will, and therefore a want of power to mould and form those entrusted to him. There will be self-love, which will probably disclose itself in its lowest form—in sensual affection for those who attract his weak and effeminate character.

Prayer.

Thou sayest to me, O my Lord, "Suffer little children to come unto Me."

It is my duty so to train them that they may come to Thee.

Pueri . . dum delinquunt affligantur aut coerceantur ut sanentur.

I must check their wayward wills; teach them to be obedient and humble; reprove their faults firmly; punish their misdeeds.

To yield weakly to their complaints is false kindness and selfish fear.

Teach me how to be firm with myself. Give me strength and steadiness of character.

Make me earnest and serious over this important work.

Give me from Thy Sacred Heart the spirit of charity, gentleness, and patience.

When I am a true religious, then I shall be a true educator of youth; then shall I be able to mould their characters and make them true servants to Thee.

Thou, my dear Lord, dost love these little ones: for their sakes teach me how to bring them to Thee.

Alas! too often have I driven them from Thee, either by selfish weakness or by injudicious severity.

Pardon me! teach me! strengthen me!

CHAPTER XXXI

OF THE CELLARER OF THE MONASTERY

Text.

Cellerarius monasterii eligatur de congregatione sapiens, maturus moribus, sobrius, non multum edax, non elatus, non turbulentus, non injuriosus, non tardus, non prodigus, sed timens Deum, qui omni congregationi sit sicut pater. Curam gerat de omnibus: sine jussione Abbatis nihil faciat. Quæ jubentur, custodiat: Fratres non contristet. Si quis frater ab eo forte aliquid irrationabiliter postulat, non spernendo eum contristet, sed rationabiliter cum humilitate male petenti deneget.

Animam suam custodiat, memor semper illius Apostolici præcepti, quia "*qui bene ministraverit, gradum bonum sibi acquirit.*" Infirmorum, infantium, hospitum, pauperumque cum omni sollicitudine curam gerat, sciens sine dubio, quia pro his omnibus in die judicii rationem redditurus est. Omnia vasa monasterii cunctamque substantiam, ac si altaris vasa sacrata conspiciat. Nihil ducat negligendum: neque avaritiæ studeat, neque prodigus sit, aut extir-

Let there be chosen out of the community, as cellarer of the monastery, a man wise and of mature character, temperate, not a great eater, nor haughty, nor headstrong, nor arrogant, not slothful nor wasteful, but a God-fearing man, who may be like a father to the whole community. Let him have the care of everything, but do nothing without leave of the Abbot. Let him take heed to what is commanded him, and not sadden his brethren. If a brother ask him for anything unreasonably, let him not treat him with contempt, and so grieve him, but reasonably and with all humility refuse what he asks for amiss. Let him be watchful over his own soul, remembering always that saying of the Apostle, that "He that hath ministered well, purchaseth to himself a good degree." Let him have especial care of the sick, of the children, of guests, and of the poor, knowing without doubt that he will have to render an account of all these on the day of judgment. Let him look upon

pator substantiæ monasterii; sed omnia mensurate faciat, et secundum jussionem Abbatis sui.

Humilitatem ante omnia habeat, et cui substantia non est quæ tribuatur, sermo responsionis, porrigatur bonus, quia scriptum est: "*Sermo bonus super datum optimum.*" Omnia quæ ei injunxerit Abbas, ipse habeat sub cura sua; a quibus eum prohibuerit, non præsumat. Fratribus constitutam annonam sine aliquo typo vel mora offerat, ut non scandalizentur, memor divini eloquii, quid mereatur "*qui scandalizaverit unum de pusillis: Expedit ei ut suspendatur mola asinaria in collo ejus et demergatur in profundum maris.*" Si congregatio major fuerit, solatia ei dentur, a quibus adjutus, et ipse æquo animo impleat officium sibi commissum. Horis competentibus dentur quæ danda sunt, et petantur quæ petenda sunt: ut nemo perturbetur, neque contristetur in domo Dei.

all the vessels and goods of the monastery as though they were the consecrated vessels of the altar. Let him not think that he may neglect anything; let him not be given to covetousness, nor wasteful, nor a squanderer of the goods of the monastery, but do all things in proper measure, and according to the bidding of his Abbot.

Let him, above all things, have humility; and to him on whom he hath nothing else to bestow, let him give at least a kind answer, as it is written: "A good word is above the best gift." Let him have under his care all that the Abbot may enjoin him, and presume not to meddle with what is forbidden him. Let him distribute to the brethren their appointed allowance of food, without arrogance or delay, that they be not scandalized; mindful of what the Word of God declareth him to deserve who "shall scandalize one of these little ones"—namely, "that a mill-stone be hanged about his neck, and that he be drowned in the depths of the sea." If the community be large, let helpers be given to him, by whose aid he may with peace of mind discharge the office committed to him. Let such things as are necessary be given and asked for at befitting times, that no one may be troubled nor grieved in the house of God.

Thoughts.

THOSE religious who have charge of temporal affairs are in great danger of becoming absorbed in the works of their office, and of forgetting their spiritual [illegible] They are often, perhaps, compelled to be

absent from community exercises, and must mix with men of the world. Hence, unless they are careful, they will lose their spiritual fervour, becoming tepid and indifferent to spiritual things. If they would read frequently and with attention the words of this chapter, and try to put them into practice, their interior spirit would not be harmed, and they would merit great glory for themselves by their self-denying administrations. If, however, they neglect these safeguards, they will become worldly, and will have a serious account to render to God at their judgment.

"This chapter," says Clavenau, "gives us a picture of a perfect religious procurator. . . . Concerning this official our Holy Father lays down—

"(*a*) That he should excel others in virtue.

"(*b*) That he should act as a father, especially to those in need.

"(*c*) That he should not oppose the will of the Abbot in any way.

"(*d*) That when anyone asks amiss, his refusal should be sweetened by humility.

"(*e*) That he should keep safe the goods of the monastery.

"(*f*) That helpers should be given to him.

"(*g*) That he should provide for the community at the fixed times."

Prayer—I. *Prayer for the Gift of Wisdom.*

Sapiens, maturus moribus.

"God of my fathers, and Lord of mercy, Who hast made all things with Thy word;

"And by Thy wisdom hast appointed man, that he should have dominion over the creature . . . and execute justice with an upright heart:

Wisdom, c. ix. "Give me wisdom, that sitteth by Thy throne, and cast me not off from Thy children.

"For I am Thy servant . . . a weak man and of short time, and falling short of the understanding of judgment and laws.

"For if one be perfect among the children of men, yet if Thy wisdom be not with him, he shall be nothing regarded.

"Thou hast chosen me to be king of Thy people, and a judge of Thy sons and daughters.

"Send wisdom out of Thy holy heaven and from the throne of Thy majesty, that she may be with me and may labour with me, that I may know what is acceptable with Thee. For she knoweth and understandeth all things, and shall lead me safely in my works, and shall preserve me by her power."

II. *Treatment of Others.*

Timens Deum. "Pierce Thou my flesh with Thy fear," O my God.

Thou art the Father of the community, and Thou lovest each member with a burning love.

Sicut pater ut nemo perturbetur in domo Dei. I am to act as the Father in Thy place. May I so act that no one may be saddened in the house of God.

Non claudus. Save me from a proud spirit, O Jesus, most humble, and Mary, the lowly handmaid of the Lord.

I am the administrator, and am not independent.

Non turbulentus, non injuriosus, fratres non contristet.

Who am I, that I dare to be arrogant and abusive, saddening the brethren?

Where, then, would be my humility before Thee, O my God, Whose steward I am?

Sermo responsionis porrigatur bonus.

Give me wisdom and kindness of speech, so that I may gladden every heart, even when I must refuse the request.

Again I beg that Thou wouldst keep me in Thy holy fear, that I may never lose the spirit of humility and obedience.

I can be humble by remembering Thee, my Master.

I can remain obedient if I realize that it is my dignity to be the "servant of the servants of God."

III. *Care of Self.*

Sine jussione Abbatis nihil faciat.

Thou, my Master, hast given to me this authority; keep safe for me the spirit of humble obedience.

Secundum jussionem Abbatis sui.

I must humble myself by submission of judgment and will to him who holds Thy place.

Such obedience is the salvation of a monk, his glory, and the foundation of all spirituality.

It will save me from sin, for there can be no sin where there is no self-will.

The gift of free-will is a gift to be feared and to be valued; it is the root of life or of death—the mother of the love or hatred of Thee, O my God.

CENTRAL COLLECTION

What more wise or safe than to submit it to Thee? "Into Thy hands, O my God, I commend my spirit."

Animam suam custodiat. Thus shall I guard my soul amidst the distractions and dangers of secular work.

Let me ever remember that everything I do must be done for Thee, my God, and not for self.

Ac si altaris vasa sacrata. Everything is Thine, and receives thereby a consecration.

"The monks look upon all that they have as consecrated to God, and so they treat everything that is brought to the monastery as holy" (Cassian).

Make me supernatural in all my thoughts, words, and actions.

Nihil ducat negligendum. Teach me how to serve Thee in everything; with humble care neglecting nothing.

Let me not forget that I came to religion to avoid being dragged down by worldly affairs.

Never let me forget that I am a monk, and under the yoke of obedience.

As I am exposed to special temptations, there is more need than ever for me to cultivate an ardent love of poverty, of obedience, and of prayer.

CHAPTER XXXII

OF THE IRON TOOLS AND PROPERTY OF THE MONASTERY

Text.

Substantiæ monasterii in ferramentis, vel vestibus, seu quibuslibet rebus, provideat Abbas fratres, de quorum vita et moribus securus sit: et iis singula, ut utile judicaverit, consignet custodienda, atque recolligenda. Ex quibus Abbas brevem teneat: ut dum sibi in ipsa assignata fratres vicissim succedunt, sciat quid dat, et quid recipit. Si quis autem sordide aut negligenter res monasterii tractaverit, corripiatur; si non emendaverit, disciplinæ regulari subjaceat.

Let the Abbot appoint brethren, on whose manner of life and character he can rely, to the charge of the iron tools, clothes, and other property of the monastery; and let him consign to their care, as he shall think fit, the things to be kept and collected after use. Of these let the Abbot keep a list, so that, as the brethren in turn succeed to different employments, he may know what he giveth and receiveth back. If anyone treat the property of the monastery in a slovenly or negligent manner, let him be corrected; and if he do not amend, let him be subjected to the discipline of the Rule.

CHAPTER XXXIII

WHETHER MONKS OUGHT TO HAVE ANYTHING OF THEIR OWN

Text.

Præcipue hoc vitium peculiare radicitus amputandum est de monasterio, ne quis præsumat aliquid dare aut accipere sine jussione Abbatis, neque aliquid habere proprium, nullam omnino rem, neque codicem, neque tabulas, neque graphium, sed nihil omnino: quippe quibus nec corpora sua, nec voluntates licet habere in propria potestate. Omnia vero necessaria a patre monasterii sperare; nec quicquam liceat habere, quod Abbas non dederit aut permiserit. Omniaque omnibus sint communia, ut scriptum est, nec quis quam suum esse aliquid dicat aut præsumat. Quod si quisquam hoc nequissimo vitio deprehensus fuerit delectari, admoneatur semel et iterum: si non emendaverit, correctioni subjaceat.

The vice of private ownership is, above all, to be cut off from the monastery by the roots. Let none presume to give or receive anything without leave of the Abbot, nor to keep anything as their own—either book, or writing-tablet or pen, or anything whatsoever—since they are permitted to have neither body nor will in their own power. But all that is necessary they may hope to receive from the Father of the monastery; nor are they allowed to keep anything which the Abbot has not given, or, at least, permitted them to have. Let all things be common to all, as it is written: "Neither did anyone say that aught which he possessed was his own." But if anyone shall be found to indulge in this most baneful vice, and after one or two admonitions do not amend, let him be subjected to correction.

Thoughts.

PERFECTION has three elements: *charity*, which says "God alone"; *humility*, which says "nothing of

self"; and *poverty* or *detachment*, which says "nothing of creatures." The created things which surround men make them forget God by absorbing their thoughts, love, and energy. The vow of poverty strikes at the very root of this undue love of creatures. A religious, fearing to forget God, surrenders *everything* into His hands. He receives back from Him for his use what His representative the Superior considers necessary and suitable. The rule of asking permission to give and to receive even little things drives more and more deeply into his mind and heart the fact that everything he has he holds on sufferance. The sense of private ownership is thus done away with. "Private possession," wrote St. Basil, speaking of Religious, "is a theft." He is freed, also, from the care of providing for himself, and his mind is, therefore, calm and clear for higher thoughts and interests.

The religious must not be content with the mere observance of the letter of his vow; he must remember that the object of the vow is to teach him detachment or "poverty of spirit." "By poverty of spirit is to be understood the casting away of all earthly goods by the spirit—*i.e.*, by one's own will through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit" (St. Thomas Aquinas, II. : II., qu. 19, art. 12).

"Voluntary poverty is the virtue by which temporal things are despised for the love of heavenly things" (St. Denis).

It is possible to keep the vow unbroken, but offend against its spirit and meaning—

(*a*) By undue attachment to what is allowed us.

(*b*) By seeking permission for better things than others have: "Whatever is contrary to monastic simplicity at once reject and detest" (Blosius).

(*c*) By having, even with permission, superfluities or things too costly or fine for one who professes poverty: "When a religious possesses superfluous goods, he possesses what belongs to another" (St. Augustine).

"What is superfluous is to be diminished, and we must love a mere sufficiency" (St. John Chrysostom).

(*d*) By being wanting in the spirit of bodily mortification—*e.g.*, by being too self-indulgent in food, drink, recreation, and by being averse to labour.

(*e*) By grumbling or repining when things are denied us.

As a religious should use the weapon of obedience actively against himself to conquer self-will, so should he teach himself detachment by a love for and an intelligent use of holy poverty.

On the Riches and Glory of Poverty.

"Oh, the riches of poverty, provided it be voluntary and for Christ! What wealth you abound in! . . . Who are so rich as the poor of Christ? There is pride which belongs to those who rejoice in Christ, and despise the world, and pride which holds nothing so precious as voluntary poverty. O narrow of soul, why do you not glory in these treasures? This pride is not condemned, but rewarded, by the Master of humility if, indeed, you have the loftiness of soul to look down as from a height upon earthly glory [redacted] it, being proud of your poverty and

loving it. Rich indeed you are if you glory in poverty" (St. Bernard).

"The Lord, declaring the happiness of the poor, says: 'Theirs is the kingdom of heaven'; not *shall* be, but *is*, for He gives them not merely an assured right to it, but a most certain foretaste of it and joyful possession. How blessed is this people to whom the Lord is their God! How near to the kingdom those who already possess and bear in their hearts the King, to serve whom is to reign! 'Funes mihi ceciderunt in præclaris, etenim hæreditas mea præclara est mihi.'

"Let others dispute over the division of the inheritance of this world; let them contend as to who shall be most miserable. I envy them not. I and my soul will rejoice in the Lord. O noble inheritance of the poor! O blessed possession of those who possess nothing! Thou givest us not only what is sufficient, but Thou coverest us with glory, Thou overwhelmest us with joy. Thou art the full measure laid up in the bosom, pressed together, and running over. Glory, then, ye poor! glory in your lowliness! Look down on the glory of this world which lies far below you, beneath your feet. Think it unseemly to lower your dignity to the level of earthly desires.

"You are exalted even unto heaven: will you now lower yourself to the mud? Eternal rewards are in store for you: will you prefer transitory things as unsubstantial as a dream?" (Blessed Guerric, Abbot of Igny, 1157).

St. Francis of Assisi said to Br. Masseo:

"My Brother, let us go to St. Peter and St. Paul,

and pray them to teach us, and to give us to possess the immeasurable treasure, so exalted and so divine that we are not worthy to possess it in our vile bodies, seeing that this is that celestial virtue by which all earthly and transitory things are trodden underfoot, and all impediments are lifted away from the soul, so that she can freely unite herself to the Eternal God. And this is the virtue which makes the soul, while still retained on earth, converse with the angels in heaven, and this it is which accompanied Christ to His Cross, with Christ was buried, with Christ was raised up, with Christ ascended into heaven, which, being given in this life to the souls enamoured of it, facilitates their flight to heaven, seeing that it guards the arms of true humility and charity. And, therefore, let us pray the most Holy Apostles of Christ, who were perfect lovers of this pearl of the Gospel of Christ, that they will beg for us this grace from our Lord Jesus Christ, that, by His most holy mercy, He would grant us the merit to be true lovers, observers, and humble disciples of this most precious, most lovable evangelical poverty" ("Little Flowers," chapter xii.).

Prayer.

Root out of my soul, O my God, everything except the love of Thee.

Hoc vitium peculiare radicitus amputandum.

Disengage my thoughts and affections from all creatures.

Unless I leave all things and follow Thee, I cannot be Thy disciple.

I will evermore cry: "Thee alone, O my God—Thee alone!"

Jesus only!

I have vowed poverty, that I might possess Thee wholly and entirely.

How mean, how valueless are all things compared with Thee!

Thou art the pearl of great price.

Thou art perfect riches.

More than I have given up do I find in Thee.

Poor indeed am I when I allow earthly things to draw me from Thee.

I have given myself to Thee. I belong to Thee wholly.

Nec corpora nec voluntates licet habere in propria potestate.

My will and my *body* belong to Thee.

It is, then, a "most wicked vice" to use them and indulge them as if they were my own.

To keep them for myself is to steal them from Thee.

I must be detached from all things, great and small.

I must not fear to bear unpleasant things for poverty's sake.

Hunger, thirst, weariness, contempt, humiliations—these are the friends and companions of holy poverty.

They will detach me from the comforts and joys of life, and bind my heart to Thee, if I welcome them.

Ne quis præsumat dare aut accipere sine jussione Abbatis.

Give me, I beseech Thee earnestly, the spirit of poverty.

Help me to keep strictly and generously all the Rules of the Order.

Save me from softness and immortification of life.

"A monk must be content with and love the worst

of everything" ("Reg.," c. vii.), as Thou didst, O my Jesus, throughout Thy life.

Pardon me for my want of the spirit of poverty; for my love of ease, luxury, pleasure; for my unspiritual view of inconveniences and hardships.

Make me, henceforth, a zealous lover and practiser of holy poverty, mortifying myself in every way, and leading a hard, and strenuous, and simple life in imitation of Thee.

CHAPTER XXXIV

WHETHER ALL OUGHT ALIKE TO RECEIVE WHAT IS NECESSARY

Text.

Sicut scriptum est: "*Dividebatur singulis, prout cuique opus erat.*" Ubi non dicimus, quod personarum (quod absit) acceptio sit, sed infirmitatum consideratio. Ubi qui minus indiget, agat Deo gratias, et non contristetur: qui vero plus indiget, humilietur pro infirmitate, et non extollatur pro misericordia, et ita omnia membra erunt in pace. Ante omnia, ne murmurationis malum pro qualicumque causa, in aliquo qualicumque verbo vel significatione appareat. Quod si deprehensus fuerit quis, districtiori disciplinæ subdatur.

As it is written: "Distribution was made to every man according as he had need." Herein we do not say that there should be respecting of persons—God forbid!—but consideration for infirmities. Let him, therefore, that hath need of less give thanks to God, and not be grieved; and let him who requireth more be humbled for his infirmity, and not made proud by the kindness shewn to him: and so all the members of the family shall be at peace. Above all, let not the evil of murmuring shew itself by the slightest word or sign on any account whatever. If anyone be found guilty herein, let him be subjected to very severe punishment.

Thoughts.

THE community life is modelled upon the life of the early Christians as recounted in the Acts of the Apostles. Fervent souls have separated themselves

from the world from the beginning, in order to live that "common" life, the example of which was set by the immediate disciples of our Lord.

Common life consists in this: that everything the individual has or receives he hands over to the community, and looks to the community for what is necessary. The ambition of a religious should be to get less rather than more, to give thanks to God for occasions to practise poverty, and to feel humbled if bodily infirmity makes dispensations from the common Rule necessary in his case. For true community life, the individual must also hand over all that he *is;* for it is the banishment of the principle of selfishness, whether of body or of soul. His soul must live the common life as well as his body, and therefore St. Benedict enjoins "peace" upon his disciples, and treats of one of the chief enemies of peace in a community—murmuring.

This is a grave and scandalous offence. It is a *grave* offence because of the evil results it has in the soul of the murmurer. The riches of a sanctified heart are: charity, peace, benignity, humility, concord, meekness. These gifts are renounced by the murmurer.

He tempts Christ who murmurs for earthly comforts in food, drink, and clothing.

He sins against Christ who murmurs against his brethren; for "What you do to one of these, you do it unto Me."

He rebels against Christ who murmurs against the words, deeds, and arrangements of Superiors, because they are in the place of Christ.

"And Moses said . . . He hath heard your murmurings with which you have murmured against *Him;* for what are we? Your murmuring is not against us, but against the Lord" (Exod. xvi. 8).

It is a *scandalous* offence, for it spreads quickly amongst the brethren, it destroys the spirit of interior obedience, and it is the ruin of peace and charity.

Prayer.

Dividebatur singulis. Distribution is made to each one of us, as we have need, by Thy Fatherly Providence.

May we have but one heart and one soul, one desire and one affection—Thyself, Who art our God and our Father.

Qui minus indiget agat, Deo gratias! The more Thou separatest me from all things, the more will I thank Thee.

"Then shall I be richer when I shall have become stronger in bearing want, for it is better to need less than to have more" (St. Augustine).

Keep me simple in my wants, humble in my requirements, and detached from all things.

Omnia membra erunt in pace. Give to all the children of Thy family the peace which comes from detachment and unselfishness.

Save us from the evil of murmuring.

Ne in aliquo verbo vel significatione appareat. Whatever may befall us, we must not murmur by the slightest word or sign.

Thou readest our hearts, and no thought is hid from Thee.

When I murmur, I show my unwillingness to serve Thee.

May Thy holy will be done in all things concerning me.

"Non murmurosum" (39th Instrument of Good Works). Remember this!

Be not a murmurer; let "Peace" be your motto.

CHAPTER XXXV

OF THE WEEKLY SERVERS IN THE KITCHEN

Text.

Fratres sic sibi invicem serviant, ut nullus excusetur a coquinæ officio, nisi aut ægritudine, aut in causa gravis utilitatis quis occupatus fuerit; quia exinde major merces et caritas acquiritur. Imbecillibus autem procurentur solatia, ut non cum tristitia hoc faciant, sed habeant omnes solatia, secundnm modum congregationis aut positionem loci. Si major congregatio fuerit, cellerarius excusetur a coquina; vel si qui (ut diximus) majoribus utilitatibus occupantur. Cæteri sibi sub caritate invicem serviant.

Egressurus de septimana, Sabbato munditias faciat. Lintea, cum quibus sibi fratres manus aut pedes tergunt, lavet: pedes vero tam ipse, qui egreditur, quam ille qui intraturus est, omnibus lavent. Vasa ministerii sui munda et sana cellerario reconsignet; qui cellerarius item intranti consignet, ut sciat quid

Let the brethren wait on one another in turn, so that none may be excused from the work of the kitchen, except he be prevented by sickness or by some more necessary employment; for thus is gained a greater reward and an increase of charity. But let assistance be given to the weak, that they may not do their work with sadness; and let all have help according to the number of the community and the situation of the place. If the community be large, let the cellarer be excused from the work in the kitchen, and also those (as already mentioned) who are occupied in more urgent business. Let the rest serve each other in turn with all charity.

Let him who endeth his week in the kitchen make all things clean on Saturday, and wash the towels wherewith the brethren dry their hands and feet; let both him who goeth out and him who is coming in wash the feet of all. Let him hand over to the cellarer the vessels of his office, clean and whole; and let

dat, aut quid recipit. Septimanarii autem, ante unam horam refectionis, accipiant super statutam annonam singulos biberes, et panem; ut hora refectionis, sine murmuratione et gravi labore, serviant fratribus suis. In diebus tamen solemnibus usque ad Missas sustineant.

Intrantes et exeuntes hebdomadarii, in oratorio mox Matutinis finitis, Dominica, omnium genibus provolvantur, postulantes pro se orari. Egrediens autem de septimana dicat hunc versum: *Benedictus es Domine Deus, qui adjuvisti me, et consolatus es me.* Quo dicto tertio, accipiat benedictionem egrediens. Subsequatur ingrediens et dicat: "*Deus in adjutorium meum intende; Domine ad adjuvandum me festina.*" Et hoc idem tertio repetatur ab omnibus. Et accepta benedictione, ingrediatur.

the cellarer deliver the same to him who entereth, that he may know what he giveth and what he receiveth. Let the weekly servers take each a cup of drink and a piece of bread, over and above the appointed portion, one hour before the time for refection, that so they may serve their brethren, when the hour cometh, without murmuring or great labour. On solemn days, however, let them forbear until after Mass.

On Sunday, as soon as Lauds are ended, let both the incoming and the outgoing servers fall on their knees before all in the Oratory, and ask their prayers. Let him who endeth his week say this verse: "Benedictus es, Domine Deus, qui adjuvisti me, et consolatus es me"; which being thrice repeated, he shall receive the blessing. Let him that beginneth his week follow, and say: "Deus in adjutorium meum intende: Domine ad adjuvandum me festina." Let this likewise be thrice repeated; and having received the blessing, let him enter on his office.

Thoughts.

COMMUNITY life imposes on all the useful discipline of mutual service. Greater love is exercised and greater reward is gained in such public and self-sacrificing duties than in private or personal exercises. We draw nearer in these to the example of our Lord, "Who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." It is an honour to serve the community, for it is a service done to Christ, and hence a religious service. St. Benedict is ever trying to

make us take a spiritual view of these duties. God's help is needed; therefore let the brother ask the prayers of the brethren humbly. At the end of the week's service let him "bless God, Who has helped and consoled him"; and let a prayer be said over him, begging that in return for his services an eternal reward may be given to him.

The custom of washing the feet of the brethren came from the Eastern monks. It was not merely for the sake of cleanliness, but was also an act of humility. Cassian tells us with what zeal the monks served one another: "These duties they hasten to fulfil with such devotedness and humility as no servant shows to the strictest or most mighty lord; so that, not content with those services which are due from them by Rule, they even rise in the night, and, by a self-imposed labour, they lighten the burdens of those upon whom these duties fall."

Prayer.

Thou, O Lord, didst come to minister to our needs.

Thou didst wash the feet of Thy disciples, and dost daily wash us from our stains.

We must take Thy place, and love to serve others.

Thou hast promised reward for the gift of a cup of water: how much greater reward may we look for in return for serving the community!

Exinde major merces.

Teach us how to do it "in Thy Name."

Deus in adjutorium. "Lord, come to my assistance; make haste to help me."

Guard Thou my incoming and my outgoing.

Take away from me the spirit of pride.

I will serve my brethren in all humility as if I serve Thee.

Sub caritate invicem serviant. I will serve them in all charity and self-forgetfulness, cheerfully, willingly, attentively.

Caritas acquiritur. Every service I do for another in this spirit will strengthen my charity.

CHAPTER XXXVI

OF THE SICK BRETHREN

Text.

Infirmorum cura ante omnia et super omnia adhibenda est, ut sicut revera Christo, ita eis serviatur, quia ipse dixit: "*Infirmus fui, et visitastis me.*" Et: "*Quod fecistis uni de his minimis meis, mihi fecistis.*" Sed et ipsi infirmi considerent, in honorem Dei sibi serviri, et non superfluitate sua contristent fratres suos, servientes sibi. Qui tamen patienter portandi sunt; quia de talibus copiosior merces acquiritur. Ergo cura maxima sit Abbati, ne aliquam negligentiam patiantur. Quibus fratribus infirmis sit cella super se deputata, et servitor timens Deum, et diligens ac sollicitus. Balneorum usus infirmis, quoties expedit, offeratur. Sanis autem, et maxime juvenibus, tardius concedatur. Sed et carnium esus infirmis, omninoque debilibus pro reparatione concedatur. At ubi meliorati fuerint, a carnibus more solito omnes abstineant. Curam autem maximam habeat Abbas, ne a cellerariis aut servitoribus negligantur infirmi: quia ad ipsum respicit, quicquid a discipulis delinquitur.

Before all things and above all things care is to be had of the sick, that they may be served in very deed as Christ Himself, for He hath said: "I was sick, and ye visited Me"; and: "What ye have done unto one of these little ones, ye have done unto Me." And let the sick themselves remember that they are served for the honour of God, and not grieve the brethren who serve them by unnecessary demands. Yet must they be patiently borne with, because from such as these is gained a more abundant reward. Let the Abbot, therefore, take the greatest care that they suffer no neglect. And let a cell be set apart by itself for the sick brethren, and one who is God-fearing, diligent, and careful, be appointed to serve them. Let the use of baths be allowed to the sick as often as may be expedient; but to those who are well, and especially to the young, let it be granted but seldom. Let the use of flesh meat also be permitted to the sick and to those that are very weakly, for their recovery; but when they are restored to health, let all abstain from meat in the accustomed manner. The Abbot must take all possible care that the sick be not neglected by the cellarer or servers, because whatever is done amiss by his disciples is laid to his charge.

CHAPTER XXXVII

OF OLD MEN AND CHILDREN

Text.

Licet ipsa natura humana trahatur ad misericordiam in his ætatibus, senum videlicet et infantum: tamen et Regulæ auctoritas eis prospiciat. Consideretur semper in eis imbecillitas, et nullatenus eis districtio Regulæ teneatur in alimentis; sed sit in eis pia consideratio, et præveniant horas canonicas.

Although human nature is of itself drawn to feel pity for these two times of life—namely, old age and infancy—yet the authority of the Rule should also provide for them. Let their weakness be always taken into account, and the strictness of the Rule respecting food be by no means kept in their regard; but let a kind consideration be shown for them, and let them eat before the regular hours.

Thoughts upon Chapters XXXVI. and XXXVII.

COULD the fatherly spirit go beyond this, "before all and above all"? Yet it is no mere human tenderness which makes St. Benedict provide "by the authority of the Rule" for the sick, the old, and the young. He lays down the supernatural principle: "They shall be served in very deed as Christ Himself."

Christian charity surrounds suffering and weakness with a halo of grandeur. The form of the sick one fades, and is replaced by the thorn-crowned figure of

Jesus. The strong are inclined to contemn the weak. Let them remember we are all members of one body, of which Christ is the head, and that "when one member of the body is sick, all the other members should suffer with it." The joys and sorrows of individuals belong to all the community. We must bear one another's burdens in order to fulfil the law of Christ.

Let us be patient, then, with the sick, the old, and the young. "Let a kind consideration be shown for them."

"Why are you seeking after Christ all the day long? I will show thee the Spouse Whom thy soul loveth. He lies in the infirmary. There He is in suffering, and racked with pain. Run to Him, minister to Him, compassionate Him. There is no need any longer to ask, 'Where liest Thou in the mid-day?' We know the place. It is the infirmary. There is nothing left for us to do but to come to His assistance" (St. Bonaventure).

The sick man has also his duties. He must remain humble amidst attentions, remembering that these are given rather to Christ than to himself; he must not make unreasonable demands, and thus grieve the brethren.

Prayer.

Ante omnia et super omnia. Before all things and above all things, my dear Lord, mayest Thou reign in my heart.

Quod fecistis uni de his minimis meis Mihi fecistis.

I must learn to recognize Thee in the sick, the poor, the aged, and the young.

In visiting them I visit Thee; in serving them I am serving Thee.

Timens Deum diligens ac sollicitus.

Make me God-fearing, diligent, and careful—God-fearing, so that I may never forget Thy presence in every creature, nor Thy words of promise, nor Thy threats of punishment. What I do to these least ones, I do unto Thee.

I am Thy servant all the days of my life.

I am Thy slave, belonging to Thee body and soul.

I must never forget to make every action a service of Thee.

In my dealings with others, I must be as a Saviour, imitating Jesus Christ.

"And He said, Surely they are My people, children that will not deny; so He became their Saviour.

"In all their affliction He was not troubled, and the angel of His Presence saved them: in His love and in His mercy He redeemed them, and He carried them and lifted them up all the days of old" (Isa. lxiii. 8, 9).

CHAPTER XXXVIII

OF THE WEEKLY READER

Text.

Mensis fratrum edentium lectio deesse non debet; ne fortuito casu, qui arripuerit codicem, legere audeat ibi, sed lecturus tota hebdomada, Dominica ingrediatur. Qui ingrediens post Missas et Communionem, petat ab omnibus pro se orari, ut avertat ab eo Deus spiritum elationis. Et dicatur hic versus in oratorio tertio ab omnibus, ipso tamen incipiente: "*Domine labia mea aperies, et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam*"; et sic accepta benedictione, ingrediatur ad legendum; et summum fiat silentium ad mensam, ut nullius mussitatio, vel vox, nisi solius legentis ibi audiatur.

Quæ vero necessaria sunt comedentibus et bibentibus, sibi sic invicem ministrent fratres, ut nullus indigeat petere aliquid. Si quid tamen opus fuerit, sonitu cujuscumque signi potius petatur quam voce.

Nec præsumat ibi aliquis de ipsa lectione, aut aliunde quicquam requirere, ne detur occasio,

Reading must not be wanting while the brethren eat at table; nor let anyone who may chance to have taken up the book presume to read, but let him who is to read throughout the week begin upon the Sunday. After Mass and Communion, let him ask all to pray for him, that God may keep from him the spirit of pride. And let this verse be said thrice in the Oratory, he himself beginning it: "O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise." And so, having received the blessing, let him enter on his reading. The greatest silence must be kept at table, so that no whispering may be heard there, nor any voice, except that of him who readeth.

And whatever is necessary for food or drink let the brethren so minister to each other, that no one need ask for anything; but should anything be wanted, let it be asked for rather by a sign than by the voice.

And let no one presume to put any questions there, either about the reading or about anything

nisi forte Prior voluerit pro ædificatione aliquid breviter dicere. Frater autem hebdomadarius accipiat mixtum prius quam incipiat legere, propter Communionem sanctam, et ne forte grave sit ei jejunium sustinere; postea autem cum coquinæ Hebdomadariis et servitoribus reficiat. Fratres autem non per ordinem legant aut cantent, sed qui ædificent audientes.

else, lest it give occasion for talking; unless, perchance, the Superior should wish to say a few words for the edification of the brethren. Let the brother who is reader for the week take a little bread and wine before he begin to read, on account of the Holy Communion, and lest it be hard for him to fast so long. Afterwards let him take his meal with the weekly cooks and other servers. The brethren are not to read or sing according to their order, but such only as may edify the hearers.

Thoughts.

RECALL the principles laid down in the chapter on Silence, and the importance St. Benedict attaches to it.

Talking at meals would distract the mind, and put it off its guard. It might forget, as a result, to cherish that self-control in food and drink which so becomes a religious. "Not in bread alone doth a man live, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." "If the flesh alone is fed," writes St. Augustine, "and not the soul, the handmaid is filled while the mistress is starved."

The public reading should be done well, "unto edification." There should be careful preparation and distinct utterance. Not to take pains is both an insult to the community and an unspiritual act. The reading is for the sake of others, and not for self-gratification. The reader, before he commences his week's reading, prays in public that his lips may be opened to the praise of God. These public duties must be done as part of the service of Christ, and

must therefore be performed carefully and reverently. The hearers should follow the reading, and restrain their thoughts and eyes. Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, writes: "I have known men both among Cluniacs and Cistercians who, while silent with their tongues, talk with their eyes, hands, and feet, and convey information that way even more clearly."

St. Benedict urges upon all courtesy to, and thought for, others: "Let the brethren so minister to each other that no one need ask for anything."

Prayer.

"O Lord, open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise."

Os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam. Teach me ever to regard a service done to my brethren as a service done to Thee.

Auferat a te spiritum elationis ne fortuito casu. Mayest Thou, O Lord, guard me at all times, and take from me the spirit of elation and carelessness.

I will remember the words of Thy servant Thomas à Kempis: "He who during meals reads well and distinctly, rejoices the brethren at the table of Jesus with a heavenly cup, and satisfies their thirst."

Help me to observe interiorly and exteriorly self-control at meals.

Whilst my body is being refreshed, feed Thou my mind and heart.

"He is not able to acquire abstinence in taking bodily food who does not fill his mind with spiritual food" (St. Gregory).

CHAPTER XXXIX

OF THE MEASURE OF FOOD

Text.

Sufficere credimus ad refectionem quotidianam tam sextæ, quam nonæ, omnibus mensibus cocta duo pulmentaria, propter diversorum infirmitates: ut forte qui ex uno non poterit edere, ex alio reficiatur. Ergo duo pulmentaria cocta fratribus omnibus sufficiant; et si fuerint inde poma, aut nascentia leguminum, addatur et tertium. Panis libra una propensa sufficiat in die, sive una sit refectio, sive prandii et cœnæ. Quod si cœnaturi sunt, de eadem libra tertia pars a cellerario servetur, reddenda cœnaturis.

Quod si labor forte factus fuerit major, in arbitrio et potestate Abbatis erit, si expediat, aliquid augere, remota præ omnibus crapula, ut nunquam surripiat Monacho indigeries: quia nihil sic contrarium est omni Christiano, quomodo crapula, sicut ait Dominus noster: "*Videte ne graventur corda vestra in crapula.*" Pueris vero minori ætate non eadem servetur quantitas, sed minor quam majoribus, servata in omnibus parcitate. Carnium vero quadrupedum ab omnibus abstineatur comestio, præter omnino debiles et ægrotos.

We think it sufficient for the daily meal, whether at the sixth or the ninth hour, that there be at all seasons of the year two dishes of cooked food, because of the weakness of different people; so that he who perchance cannot eat of the one may make his meal of the other. Let two dishes, then, suffice for all the brethren; and if there be any fruit or young vegetables, let a third be added. Let one pound's weight of bread suffice for the day, whether there be but one meal, or both dinner and supper. If they are to sup, let a third part of the pound be kept by the cellarer, and given them for supper.

If, however, their work chance to have been hard, it shall be in the Abbot's power, if he think fit, to make some addition, avoiding, above everything, all surfeiting, that the monks be not overtaken by indigestion. For there is nothing so adverse to a Christian as gluttony, according to the words of our Lord: "See that your hearts be not overcharged with surfeiting." And let not the same quantity be allotted to children of tender years, but less than to their elders, moderation being observed in every case. Let everyone abstain from the flesh of four-footed animals, except the very weak and the sick.

CHAPTER XL

OF THE MEASURE OF DRINK

Text.

"*Unusquisque proprium habet donum ex Deo: alius sic, alius vero sic.*" Et ideo cum aliqua scrupulositate a nobis mensura victus aliorum constituitur. Tamen infirmorum contuentes imbecillitatem, credimus heminam vini per singulos sufficere per diem. Quibus autem donat Deus tolerantiam abstinentiæ, propriam se habituros mercedem sciant.

Everyone hath his proper gift from God, one after this manner, another after that. And therefore it is with some misgiving that we appoint the measure of other men's living. Yet, considering the infirmity of the weak, we think that one pint of wine a day is sufficient for each; but let those to whom God gives the endurance of abstinence know that they shall have their proper reward.

Quod si aut loci necessitas, vel labor, aut ardor æstatis, amplius poposcerit, in arbitrio Prioris consistat, considerans in omnibus, ne subrepat satietas aut ebrietas. Licet legamus, vinum omnino Monachorum non esse; sed quia nostris temporibus id Monachis persuaderi non potest, saltem vel hoc consentiamus, ut non usque ad satietatem bibamus, sed parcius: quia *vinum apostatare facit etiam sapientes.* Ubi autem loci necessitas exposcit, ut nec suprascripta mensura inveniri possit, sed multo minus, aut ex toto nihil, benedicant Deum, qui ibi habitant, et non murmurent. Hoc

If, however, the situation of the place, the work, or the heat of summer require more, let it be in the power of the Superior to grant it, taking care at all times that surfeit or drunkenness creep not in. And although we read that wine ought by no means to be the drink of monks, yet, since in our times monks cannot be persuaded of this, let us at least agree not to drink to satiety, but sparingly, because "wine maketh even the wise to fall away." But where the necessity of the place alloweth not even the aforesaid measure, but much less, or none at all, let those who dwell there

autem omnino admonentes, ut absque murmurationibus sint.	bless God, and not murmur. This above all we admonish, that there be no murmuring among them.

Thoughts upon Chapters XXXIX. and XL.

ST. BENEDICT deals first with the quantity of food, secondly with the quality, and thirdly asserts that all excess must be avoided. He evidently thinks that "wine ought by no means to be the drink of the monks." But he is too humble and considerate "to appoint the measure of other men's living." He makes a suggestion, but practically leaves the Abbot to settle the question of food and drink, according to his discretion. He insists, however, that both food and wine must be taken sparingly. Each one has his own needs. Those who can do with less are to thank God, and those who require more must humble themselves. Though a rule cannot be given to suit all, yet with regard both to quantity and quality we may say that a religious should aim at simplicity and avoid superfluities. A wise discretion is necessary. Father Baker's principle is: "The soul is not to serve the body, but the body the soul; so that if one of them must for the benefit of the other be a loser, it is most just that the loss should be on the body's side." One who wishes to keep himself from sloth must live sparingly. An old writer has asserted that "a full stomach makes the will torpid and clouds the mind"; and Father Baker says: "Things pleasing to nature (*e.g.*, meals, sleep) are to be accepted as the Will of God, and not for the pleasure to be gained from them."

Blosius writes: "In refreshing the body with food, drink, or sleep, he must not consider pleasure, but the support of nature. He should take every morsel of food and every draught of drink with moderation and self-restraint for the glory of God; and while thus refreshing nature, he should, with a certain holy fear, remember the law of denial. . . . Although he should feel some earthly gratification in eating and drinking, he should not admit it into his soul, nor should he cleave unto it. . . . He should prefer to have simple rather than costly things provided for his use, and so far from desiring what is superfluous, he should choose poverty rather than abundance" ("Spiritual Instruction," chapter ii., section 2).

Prayer.

My dear Lord, teach me to be mortified.

To nourish my flesh unduly is to feed an enemy.

To indulge my appetites is to nourish my vices.

Prayer will become tedious to me; drowsiness will overcome me.

I shall be slow to rise, indolent at prayer, lazy in mind, and weak in will.

My dear Lord, I cannot take Thy chalice and the chalice of demons.

I choose Thy chalice. I do not pray, "Take this chalice from me."

It is the chalice of abstinence and sobriety.

It extinguishes the fires of luxury.

Chaste thoughts proceed from it.

"It is the refreshment of the soul, the food of the

mind, the life of angels, the death of sin, the uprooter of vices, the source of grace, the foundation of chastity" (St. Ambrose).

Teach me, dear Lord, and help me.

Unusquisque proprium donum.

May I avoid all forms of self-indulgence as a good religious.

Give me, O Lord, the "gift" of abstinence.

"Sparingly, and not to satiety," must be my rule —"Non ad satietatem sed parcius."

Propriam se habituros mercedem.

I know, my Master, that Thou hast rewards for abstinence. May these encourage me to live, as far as possible, according to these chapters of the Holy Rule.

CHAPTER XLI

AT WHAT HOURS THE BRETHREN ARE TO TAKE THEIR MEALS

Text.

A sancto Pascha usque ad Pentecosten ad sextam reficiant fratres, et ad seram cœnent. A Pentecoste autem tota æstate (si labores agrorum non habent Monachi, aut nimietas æstatis non perturbat) quarta et sexta feria jejunent usque ad nonam: reliquis vero diebus ad sextam prandeant. Quæ prandii sexta, si opera in agris habuerint, aut æstatis fervor nimius fuerit, continuanda erit, et in Abbatis sit providentia. Et sic omnia temperet atque disponat, qualiter et animæ salventur, et quod faciunt fratres, absque justa murmuratione faciant. Ab Idibus autem Septembris, usque ad caput Quadragesimæ, ad nonam semper reficiant. In Quadragesima vero usque ad Pascha, ad Vesperam reficiant. Ipsa tamen Vespera sic agatur, ut lumine lucernæ non indigeant reficientes, sed luce adhuc diei omnia consummentur. Sed et omni tempore, sive cœnæ, sive refectionis hora sic temperetur, ut cum luce fiant omnia.

From holy Easter until Pentecost let the brethren dine at the sixth hour and sup in the evening. But from Pentecost throughout the summer (unless they have to work in the fields or are harassed by excessive heat) let them fast on Wednesdays and Fridays until the ninth hour, but on other days dine at the sixth. Should they have field labour, or should the heat of the summer be very great, they must always take their dinner at the sixth hour. Let the Abbot provide for this, and let him so arrange and adapt all things that souls may be saved, and that the brethren may do what they have to do without just cause for murmuring. From the Ides of September until the beginning of Lent let them always dine at the ninth hour, and during Lent, until Easter, in the evening. And let the hour of Vespers be so ordered that they have no need of a lamp while eating, and let all be over while it is yet daylight. At all times, whether of dinner or supper, let the hour for the meal be so arranged that everything be done by daylight.

Thoughts.

MEALS were taken at the following times:

From Easter to Pentecost.—Dinner at twelve o'clock, supper in the evening.

From Pentecost till September 13.—Dinner at twelve o'clock, except on Wednesdays and Fridays, which were days of fasting, when dinner was not till three o'clock.

From September 13 *till Lent.*—Dinner at three o'clock.

During Lent. — Dinner in the evening after Vespers.

The rigour of the Rule in regard to food has been much mitigated. We look upon ourselves as weaker than our Fathers, and are inclined to think that modern work is incompatible with fasting. We must remember, however, that austerity is necessary for a real religious life. It is Father Faber's opinion that if this unhappy land is ever to be won back to Christ, "it must gather to the Baptist first and be attracted to the Jordan by the simplicity of supernatural strictness and antique austerity." St. Athanasius says: "If one comes to you and says, 'Do not fast frequently, lest you grow weak,' do not believe him or listen to him, for by him your enemy suggests these things to you."

St. Charles Borromeo laid down two rules for himself:

First, begin with small privations, and by degrees increase them. Second, do not take up again what

you have once relinquished. At last the Saint was content with bread and water alone.

St. John Climacus, in the thirteenth degree of the Ladder of Perfection, speaks very strongly of the necessity of abstinence from food, and of the good effects of fasting. "The mortification of the appetite produces humiliation of heart, whereas the gratification of the palate tends to fill the mind with pride and vanity. . . . It is wonderful to see how the mind, which is immaterial, is sullied and obscured by the body, and how, on the contrary, the same mind, which has nothing in its nature material, is sometimes purified and elevated by the very body, which is but dust and ashes. . . . There is need of a masculine energy to overcome this vice (intemperance in food or drink). He who becomes master of it has opened a straight path to tranquillity of mind and perfect continence. Fasting is a violence which we offer to nature; a retrenchment of all that can merely gratify the palate; a repression of the ardour of concupiscence; a banishment of bad thoughts; a deliverance from impure dreams; the purification of prayer; the torch of the soul; the guardian of the mind; the illumination of our hearts; the door of compunction; the humble moaning of penitence; an affection filled with joy; the bridle of the tongue; the tranquillity of the spirit; the rampart of obedience; the dispenser of sleep; a salutary remedy for the health of our bodies; the mediator of happy peace to the soul, and the serenity of the passions; the blotting out of sin; the gate of Paradise; and a celestial pleasure.

"Let us ask this vice (of intemperance in food and drink) whence it derived its birth, what are its offspring. It will thus haughtily reply to us: "The quality of the food, more or less delicate, is that which opens for me an entrance into the souls of men. Custom is the cause of my insatiable avidity, and that which feeds and nourishes my growth is the same custom, together with insensibility of mind and the forgetfulness of death. Why do you inquire about my children? Were I to name them all to you, the sand on the seashore would not equal their number. But notice those whom I brought first into the world, and who thence became my favourites. My eldest son is the incentive to voluptuousness; my second, hardness of heart; my third, drowsiness. I send fort a deluge of evil thoughts, which are the sources of all kinds of depravity, and a bottomless sea of secret and detestable impurities. My daughters are idleness, vain and improfitable conversation, presumptuous liberty of speech, raillery, buffoonery, contradiction, obstinacy, indocility, insensibility, the captivity and abasement of the mind, ostentation and vanity, a foolish and rash confidence in our strength, the love of the world, accompanied by inattention at prayer, troubled thoughts, and oftentimes many unexpected and unforeseen evils, which are followed by despair—the greatest and most dangerous of all misfortunes."

To read the old spiritual writers on this point makes one wonder whether something essential is left out, or modified out of all recognition, in most modern forms of spirituality. Mortification in food

and drink is as necessary now as it was in former days. If we cannot be as heroic as our forefathers, we can be mortified—nay, even austere—in our meals without damage to health. Some mortification of the appetite we must practise if we wish to be spiritual. We must take advice and do what we can. It must always be a regret to us that we cannot return to the austerity of early days. (Read Father Faber, "Growth in Holiness," chapter xi.)

Father Curtis, S.J., wrote as follows: "Without proceeding to any degree of rigour regarding the palate, a great and most salutary species of mortification may be exercised in the due observance of temperance, in the choice of the plainest kinds of food, and the rejection of such as flatter the appetite, as also in avoiding unnecessary condiments and gratifications of a minor description. Health and corporal vigour, far from being injured or diminished, are promoted in a great degree when judicious self-denial has retrenched all superfluities, and reduced both the quantity and the quality of refection to what is merely necessary and salutary to the constitution."

Prayer.

My dear Lord, transform me into Thy likeness.

Cast the unclean spirit out of me.

Rom. viii. 12. "Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh."

"This spirit is cast out only by prayer and fasting."

I am striving for the mastery: help me, Lord.

I must abstain from all that feeds my luxury.

I must "chastise my body, and bring it into subjection."

"Every one that striveth for mastery, abstaineth himself from all things."

By fasting I will strive, Lord, to subdue the corrupt inclinations of my flesh.

Enemies surround me without; it is folly to harbour foes within.

To be spiritual I must overcome the carnal.

1 Cor. ii. 14. "The sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the spirit of God; for it is foolish to him, and he cannot understand."

Most holy Father St. Benedict, I am unworthy of thee.

Four Instruments thou givest me to use:

Cap. IV. "Non multum edacem" (36th); "Non vinolentum" (35th); "Delicias non amplecti" (12th); "Jejunium amare" (13th).

May I regulate my use of food and drink by these.

O child of St. Benedict, love fasting; abstain from delicate living; do not eat much; love not wine.

Behold useful instruments to overcome your flesh!

Use them diligently, use them lovingly, and use them wisely.

Preface for Lent. "It is truly meet and just . . . that we should at all times give thanks to Thee, Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Eternal God, Who by bodily fasting restraineth vices, upliftest minds, and grantest strength and rewards, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

CHAPTER XLII

THAT NO ONE MAY SPEAK AFTER COMPLINE

Text.

Omni tempore silentio debent studere monachi, maxime tamen nocturnis horis. Et ideo omni tempore, sive jejunii, sive prandii, si tempus fuerit prandii, mox ut surrexerint a cœna, sedeant omnes in unum, et legat unus Collationes, vel Vitas Patrum, aut certe aliquid quod ædificet audientes; non autem Heptateucum, aut Regum: quia infirmis intellectibus non erit utile illa hora hanc Scripturam audire; aliis vero horis legantur. Si autem jejunii dies fuerit, dicta Vespera, parvo intervallo, mox accedant ad lectionem Collationum, ut diximus, et lectis quatuor aut quinque foliis, vel quantum hora permittit, omnibus in unum concurrentibus, per hanc moram lectionis: si quis forte in assignato sibi commisso fuerit occupatus, occurrat.

Omnes ergo in unum positi, compleant; et exeuntes a Completorio nulla sit licentia denuo cuiquam loqui aliquid. Quod si

Monks should love silence at all times, but especially during the hours of the night. Therefore, on all days, whether of fasting or otherwise, let them sit down all together as soon as they have risen from supper (if it be not a fast-day), and let one of them read the "Conferences" [of Cassian], or the Lives of the Fathers, or something else which may edify the hearers. Not, however, the Heptateuch, nor the Book of Kings; for it will not profit those of weak understanding to hear those parts of the Scripture at that hour; they may, however, be read at other times. If it be a fast-day, then a short time after Vespers let them assemble for the reading of the "Conferences," as we have said; four or five pages being read, or as much as time alloweth, so that during the reading all may gather together, even those who may have been occupied in some work enjoined them.

Everyone, then, being assembled, let them say Compline; and when that is finished, let no one be allowed to speak to any-

inventus fuerit quisquam prævaricari hanc taciturnitatis regulam, gravi vindictæ subjaceat; excepto si necessitas hospitum supervenerit, aut forte Abbas alicui aliquid jusserit. Quod tamen et ipsum cum summa gravitate et moderatione honestissime fiat.

one. And if anyone be found to evade this rule of silence, let him be subjected to severe punishment; unless the presence of guests should make it necessary, or the Abbot should chance to give any command. Yet, even then, let it be done with the utmost gravity and moderation.

Thoughts.

"MONKS should love silence at all times."

This is a concise and pithy maxim, containing a most important truth. We have already had St. Benedict's teaching upon the virtue of silence in Chapter VI.

We are ordered to do more than keep silence; we have to love it. We must love to be alone with our Lord, for we shall never attain to the remembrance of His Presence, and to that peace of soul in which His Voice can be heard, except by silence and solitude of spirit.

Especially must we love silence at night. When the day's work is over, we can return to our hearts in humble self-examination and contrition, and withdraw from all interests to the secret presence of God. There is a spirit of awe and reverential fear in this night silence. It is no ordinary silence; it is the "great silence," the "summum silentium."

St. Benedict wishes it to be considered a serious part of the monastic discipline, the breach of which is to be punished severely.

Prayer.

Omni tempore silentio debent studere monachi.

I must love silence.

Not for its own sake, but for all that it implies and begets.

A spiritual man loves to be silent, because he loves to remember thy Presence, O God.

He loves to remain with Thee, sweet Master.

He loves to speak to Thee continually in affective prayer.

It is the silence of spiritual activity, not of vacuity.

My soul is the "garden enclosed."

Come, Father, walk with Thy child.

Maxime nocturnis horis.

When my day's work is over, I will return to my Father's house.

I must regret before Thee the negligences and sins of the day.

Ps. iv.

The infidelities of my heart I will mourn for on my bed.

I will rouse my will to sorrow;

I will urge it to bind itself more firmly to Thee.

With my whole being I will turn to Thee, my dear Master.

Warm my heart at the fire of Thy Sacred Heart.

Cast Thy fire upon this cold, barren earth.

Keep me for Thyself.

Send Thy angels to uphold me, lest I stumble, lest the devil tempt me, lest sin stain me.

CHAPTER XLIII

OF THOSE WHO COME LATE TO THE WORK OF GOD, OR TO TABLE

Text.

Ad horam Divini Officii, mox ut auditum fuerit signum, relictis omnibus, quælibet fuerint in manibus, summa cum festinatione curratur; cum gravitate tamen, ut non scurrilitas inveniat fomitem. Ergo nihil operi Dei præponatur. Quod si quis ad Nocturnas Vigilias post *Gloriam* Psalmi nonagesimi quarti (quem propter hoc omnino protrahendo et morose volumus dici) occurrerit, non stet in ordine suo in choro, sed ultimus omnium stet, aut in loco quem talibus negligentibus seorsum constituerit Abbas, ut videatur ab ipso, vel ab omnibus, usque dum completo opere Dei, publica satisfactione pœniteat.

Ideo autem eos in ultimo aut seorsum judicavimus debere stare, ut visi ab omnibus, vel pro ipsa verecundia sua emendentur. Nam si foras Oratorium remaneant, erit forte talis qui se aut recolloceat et dormiat, aut certe sedeat foris, vel fabulis vacet, et det occasio maligno; sed in-

At the hour of Divine Office, as soon as the signal is heard, let everyone, leaving whatever he had in hand, hasten to the Oratory with all speed, and yet with seriousness, so that no occasion may be given for levity. Let nothing then be preferred to the Work of God. And should anyone come to the Night Office after the "Gloria" of the ninety-fourth Psalm (which for this reason we wish to be said very slowly and protractedly), let him not stand in his order in the choir, but last of all, or in the place set apart by the Abbot for the negligent, so that he may be seen by him and by all, until, the work of God being ended, he have made satisfaction by public penance.

The reason why we have judged it fitting for them to stand in the last place, or apart, is that, being seen of all, they may amend for very shame. For, if they were to remain outside the Oratory, some one, perchance, would return to his place and go to sleep, or, at all events,

grediatur intus, ut nec totum perdat, et de reliquo emendetur. Diurnis autem horis, qui ad opus Dei post versum et *Gloriam* primi Psalmi qui post versum dicitur, occurrerit, lege qua supradiximus, in ultimo stet loco: nec præsumat sociari choro psallentium usque ad satisfactionem, nisi forte Abbas licentiam dederit permissione sua; ita tamen, ut satisfaciat reus ex hoc.

would sit down outside, and give himself to idle talk, and thus an occasion would be given to the evil one. Let him, therefore, enter, that he may not lose the whole, and may amend for the future. At the day hours, let him who cometh to the work of God after the verse, and the "Gloria" of the first Psalm, which followeth it, stand in the last place as ordered above, and not presume to join with the choir in the Divine Office until he hath made satisfaction; unless, perchance, the Abbot shall permit him so to do—on condition, however, that he afterwards do penance.

Ad mensam autem qui ante versum non occurrerit, ut simul omnes dicant versum et orent, et sub uno simul omnes accedant ad mensam; qui per negligentiam suam aut vitium non occurrerit, usque ad secundam vicem pro hoc corripiatur: si denuo non emendaverit, non permittatur ad mensæ communis participationem, sed sequestratus a consortio omnium reficiat solus, sublata ei portione sua vini, usque ad satisfactionem et emendationem. Similiter autem patiatur, qui ad illum versum non fuerit præsens, qui post cibum dicitur. Nec quisquam præsumat ante statutam horam, vel postea quicquam cibi vel potus percipere. Sed et si cui offertur aliquid a Priore, et accipere renuerit, hora qua desideraverit, hoc quod prius recusavit, aut aliud, omnino nihil percipiat, usque ad emendationem congruam.

If anyone, through his own negligence and fault, come not to table before the verse, so that all may say this and the prayer together, and together sit down to table, let him be once or twice corrected. If after this he do not amend, let him not be permitted to share in the common table, but be separated from the companionship of all, and eat alone, his portion of wine being taken from him, until he hath made satisfaction and amends. Let him be punished in like manner who is not present also at the verse which is said after meals. And let no one presume to take food or drink before or after the appointed hour; but should a brother be offered anything by the Superior, and refuse to take it, if he afterwards desire either what he before refused, or anything else, he shall receive nothing whatever, until he hath made proper satisfaction.

Thoughts.

ST. BENEDICT gives us in this chapter another golden rule: "Nihil operi Dei præponatur"—"Nothing is to be preferred to the work of God." It stands first amongst our duties. We must obey the signal for the Divine Office *promptly*. The "Regula Magistri" says: "When the signal for Office is given . . . let their feet hasten to church and their minds to God."

We must be prompt in rising. Laziness in the morning will affect all the Office. We must promptly obey the bell which summons us to the praise of God, and prepare ourselves by recollection to do the great work with becoming reverence. The Divine Office must be taken seriously, for it is a work of great dignity, and is performed in the presence of God and His angels. This thought should banish all levity of demeanour. In community life, one unpunctual or frivolous member does much harm, and lowers the standard of observance and regularity. To keep ourselves at the proper level of religious earnestness implies a constant struggle against ourselves, and hence we need all the help we can get. The spirit of imitation is strong within us; we unconsciously absorb the habits of thought and action which prevail around us, especially those which gratify our lower nature. Hence lax and unpunctual members of a community are drags on the spiritual life of others, and exercise a bad influence.

If we have to say the Divine Office privately, the

maxim, "*Nothing* is to be preferred to the Divine Office," should be remembered. It will save us from giving too much time to external work, and keep us from trying to save time by saying our Office at odd times or in unsuitable places.

It is our chief duty as monks, and should, therefore, be said with regularity and seriousness. We should love it, and be prompt and willing in its performance, avoiding haste and restlessness, which ruin devotion.

At community acts all should be present. To absent oneself from meals, or from any other duty, implies a want both of obedience and of the community spirit. It is one form of "propriety"; one way of pleasing self instead of conquering self by obedience.

"Let no one presume to take food or drink before or after the appointed times." This is to teach the monk self-restraint, and also to impress upon him the fact that he is a member of a community. Personal tastes must be subordinated to the common law of the monastery.

Prayer.

"Nothing is to be preferred to the work of God."

Leave all things willingly, O my soul!

Relictis omnibus. Leave thy interests, thy comforts, thy levity, and thy lethargy.

Leave all things to follow Christ.

The King summons his chosen one.

This work is thy privilege, thy dignity.

Thou art an angel of God on earth.

Be prompt, then, and serious.

Summa festinatione cum gravitate.

"I will enter into Thy house, O my God, and I will adore at Thy Holy Temple."

"It is a good thing to confess to Thee, O Lord, and to sing Psalms to Thy Name."

Remember to Whom thou prayeth. Be zealous and reverent.

"Before prayer prepare thy soul, and be not as one that tempteth God."

Sub uno omnes accedant ad mensam.

Help me to be a fervent member of Thy community, O my God.

May I set a good example to all by my regularity.

Give me a love for the common life.

How terrible to spoil the lives of others!

Do not others find me an enemy within their own household?

Save me, O Lord, from unpunctuality and carelessness.

CHAPTER XLIV

OF THOSE WHO ARE EXCOMMUNICATED: HOW THEY ARE TO MAKE SATISFACTION

Text.

Qui pro gravioribus culpis ab Oratorio et a mensa excommunicatur, hora, qua opus Dei in Oratorio celebratur, ante fores Oratorii prostratus jaceat, nihil dicens; nisi tantum posito in terra capite et prostratus, pronus omnium de Oratorio exeuntium pedibus se projiciat. Et hoc tamdiu faciat usque dum Abbas judicaverit satisfactum esse. Qui dum jussus ab Abbate venerit, provolvat se ipsius Abbatis pedibus, deinde omnium vestigiis fratrum, ut orent pro eo.

Et tunc, si jusserit Abbas, recipiatur in choro, vel in ordine, quo Abbas decreverit: ita sane, ut Psalmum aut lectionem vel aliud quid non præsumat in Oratorio imponere, nisi iterum Abbas jubeat. Et omnibus horis, dum completur opus Dei, projiciat se in terram, in loco in quo stat, et sic satisfaciat, usque dum ei jubeat Abbas, ut quiescat ab hac satisfactione. Qui vero pro levibus culpis excommunicantur tantum a mensa, in Oratorio satisfaciant usque ad jus-

Let him who for graver offences is excommunicated from the Oratory and the table prostrate himself at the door of the Oratory, saying nothing, at the hour when the work of God is being performed; lying prone, with his face upon the ground, at the feet of all who go out from the Oratory. Let him continue to do this until the Abbot judge that he hath made satisfaction; and then, coming at the Abbot's bidding, let him cast himself at his feet and at the feet of all, that they may pray for him.

After this, if the Abbot so order, let him be received back into the choir in such a place as he shall appoint, yet so that he presume not to intone Psalm, or lesson, or anything else in the Oratory unless the Abbot again command him. And at all the hours, when the work of God is ended, let him cast himself on the ground, in the place where he standeth, and so make satisfaction, until such time as the Abbot bid him cease therefrom. But let those, who for lighter

sionem Abbatis; et tamdiu hoc faciant, usque dum benedicat, et dicat: Sufficit.

faults are excommunicated only from the table, make satisfaction in the Oratory so long as the Abbot shall command, and continue so doing until he bless them and say it is enough.

Thoughts.

In this chapter our Holy Father supplies some omissions in the treatment of the excommunicated set down in Chapters XXIV. and XXV. He had not told us that they were to lie prostrate outside during the Divine Office, and while the brethren came out of the Oratory; nor had he told us of the mode in which they were to be reconciled. It is thought that when the Abbot considered they had given proofs of amendment, he called the brethren to Chapter. The offender was then summoned, and gave further proof of humility and amendment by prostrating and asking all to pray for him. Even after this, his amendment was put to further proof. He was allowed to join the choir, but not to perform any of the official duties, and at the end of each Hour he had to humble himself by prostrating in his place. This legislation shows us how much St. Benedict valued the discipline of self-humiliation and penance.

CHAPTER XLV

OF THOSE WHO MAKE MISTAKES IN THE ORATORY

Text.

Si quis, dum pronuntiat Psalmum, responsorium, aut antiphonam vel lectionem, fefellerit: nisi cum satisfactione ibi coram omnibus humiliatus fuerit, majori vindictæ subjaceat; quippe qui noluit humilitate corrigere, quod negligentia deliquit. Infantes vero pro tali culpa vapulent.

If anyone make a mistake in the recitation of a Psalm, responsory, antiphon, or lesson, and do not humble himself by making satisfaction there before all, let him be subjected to severer punishment, as one who would not correct by humility what he did wrong through negligence. But children for such faults are to be whipped.

Thoughts.

BREACHES of etiquette in the presence of the King are not overlooked even though they are unintentional. Mistakes in the Divine Service are, at least, acts of material irreverence for which we must humble ourselves.

If we remember God's presence, we shall not be forgetful and slipshod.

Children are not likely to be influenced by spiritual motives; therefore whip them at once.

CHAPTER XLVI

OF THOSE WHO OFFEND IN ANY OTHER MATTERS

Text.

Si quis dum in labore quovis, in coquina, in cellario, in ministerio, in pistrino, in horto, in arte aliqua dum laborat, vel in quocumque loco aliquid deliquerit, aut fregerit quippiam, aut perdiderit, vel aliud quid excesserit, et non veniens continuo ante Abbatem vel congregationem, ipse ultro satisfecerit et prodiderit delictum suum; dum per alium cognitum fuerit, majori subjaceat emendationi. Si animæ vero peccati causa latens fuerit, tantum Abbati, aut spiritualibus senioribus patefaciat, qui sciant curare sua, et aliena vulnera non detegere aut publicare.

If anyone while at work in the kitchen or the cellar, in serving the brethren, in the bakehouse or the garden, or at any other occupation, or in any place whatever, commit any fault, or break or lose anything, or transgress in any other way, and do not come immediately before the Abbot and community, and of himself confess and make satisfaction for his fault, if it is made known by another, he shall be subjected to more severe correction. If, however, the guilt of his offence be hidden in his own soul, let him manifest it to the Abbot only or to his spiritual seniors, who know how to heal their own wounds, and will not disclose or publish those of others.

Thoughts.

THE monastic life in all its details is the service of God, and not of man; it is the "schola servitii Domini." All the duties of this life should therefore be done with that thoroughness and perfection which the service of God demands.

The *voluntary* confession of faults is of great help in the spiritual life; for (1) it helps us to obtain purity of conscience; (2) it safeguards and deepens humility; (3) it saves us from carelessness and from the evils of self-justification.

CHAPTER XLVII

OF SIGNIFYING THE HOUR FOR THE WORK OF GOD

Text.

Nuntianda hora operis Dei, die noctuque sit cura Abbati, aut ipse nuntiare, aut tali sollicito fratri injungat hanc curam, ut omnia horis competentibus compleantur. Psalmos autem, vel antiphonas post Abbatem, ordine suo, quibus jussum fuerit, imponant. Cantare autem aut legere non præsumat, nisi qui potest ipsum officium implere, ut ædificentur audientes. Quod cum humilitate, et gravitate, et tremore faciat, et cui jusserit Abbas.

Let the announcing of the hour for the work of God, both by day and night, be the Abbot's care, either by signifying it himself, or by entrusting the duty to such a careful brother that all things may be done at the appointed times. Let the Psalms and antiphons be intoned by those whose duty it is, each in his order, after the Abbot. Let no one presume to sing or to read except such as can so perform the office that the hearers may be edified. And let it be done with humility, gravity, and awe, and by those whom the Abbot hath appointed.

Thoughts.

We see in this chapter how solicitous St. Benedict is for the Divine Office. He himself was "diligent in watching." In the Dialogues of St. Gregory, chapter xxxv., we read: "The man of God, Bennet, being diligent in watching, rose up early, before the time of Matins (his monks being yet at rest), and

came to the window of his chamber, where he offered up his prayers to Almighty God."

Let the brother whose duty it is to signify the hour of the Divine Office be punctual, so that "all things may be done at the appointed times." These last few words embody a great principle both for the public life of the monastery and for the private life of each religious. It cannot be carried out without detachment from one's own will, ready obedience, and zeal for the service of God.

"Ut ædificentur audientes." This should be a law to us in all our public work. We must think of others, spare no pains in the way of necessary preparation, and be careful in the actual performance.

Public duties—*e.g.*, of the choir, of reading, and of preaching—should be entered upon with "humility, gravity, and awe."

No spirit of levity should insult our hearers, and no consideration of personal convenience, no laziness of preparation or slovenliness of performance, should interfere with the good we could otherwise do to others. Let us think of them, and not of ourselves.

Prayer.

Cf. Cap. LVIII. Am I solicitous for Thy work, O my God?

By night and by day it is my privilege to praise Thee.

"A solis ortu usque ad occasum laudabile nomen Domini."

Pay thy promises, O my soul, to Thy God.

Horis competentibus. Pay them fully, pay them promptly at the appointed times.

Cum humilitate. I will stand before Thee in all humility.

Thou art the All-Powerful, the All-Holy.

I am a weak sinner.

Tremore. Fill me with awe in Thy presence.

When angels tremble before Thee, shall I be proud or frivolous?

Gravitate. Make me serious and grave.

When I read or sing, it is for Thee and for Thy children.

For Thee: to do Thee honour, to do Thee loving service.

Ut ædificentur. *For Thy children:* to edify them, to instruct them, to bring them nearer to Thee.

May I be unsparing in my efforts and unselfish in my aims.

For Thee alone, dear Lord—for Thee alone I work!

Keep far from me all vanity in my work.

Rouse me from laziness and want of care.

CHAPTER XLVIII

OF THE DAILY MANUAL LABOUR

Text.

Otiositas inimica est animæ. Et ideo certis temporibus occupari debent fratres in labore manuum; certis iterum horis in lectione divina. Ideoque hac dispositione credimus utraque tempora ordinari; id est, ut a Pascha usque ad kalendas Octobris mane exeuntes, a prima usque ad horam pene quartam laborent, quod necessarium fuerit. Ab hora autem quarta usque ad horam quasi sextam lectioni vacent.

Post sextam autem surgentes a mensa, pausent in lectis suis cum omni silentio: aut forte qui voluerit sibi legere, sic legat, ut alium non inquietet. Agatur Nona temperius, mediante octava hora: et iterum, quod faciendum est, operentur usque ad vesperam. Si autem necessitas loci, aut paupertas exegerit, ut ad fruges colligendas per se occupentur, non contristentur; quia tunc vere Monachi sunt, si labore manuum suarum vivunt, sicut et patres nostri et Apostoli. Omnia tamen mensurate fiant propter pusillanimes.

Idleness is an enemy to the soul; and hence at certain seasons the brethren ought to occupy themselves in the labour of their hands, and at others in holy reading. We think, therefore, that the times for each may be disposed as follows: from Easter to the first of October, let them, in going from Prime in the morning, labour at whatever is required of them until about the fourth hour. From the fourth hour until nearly the sixth let them apply themselves to reading.

And when they rise from table, after the sixth hour, let them rest on their beds in perfect silence; or, if anyone perchance desire to read, let him do so in such a way as not to disturb anyone else. Let None be said in good time, at about the middle of the eighth hour; and then let them again work at whatever has to be done until Vespers. And if the needs of the place, or their poverty, oblige them to labour themselves at gathering in the crops, let them not be saddened thereat; because then they are truly monks, when they

A kalendis autem Octobris usque ad caput Quadragesimæ, usque ad horam secundam plenam lectioni vacent: hora secunda agatur Tertia; et usque ad Nonam omnes in opus suum laborent, quod eis injungitur. Facto autem primo signo nonæ horæ, disjungant se ab opere suo singuli, et sint parati, dum secundum signum pulsaverit. Post refectionem autem vacent lectionibus suis, aut Psalmis. In Quadragesimæ vero diebus, a mane usque ad tertiam plenam, lectioni vacent, et usque ad decimam plenam operentur quod eis injungitur. In quibus diebus Quadragesimæ, accipiant omnes singulos codices de Bibliotheca, quos per ordinem ex integro legant: qui codices in capite Quadragesimæ dandi sunt.

Ante omnia sane deputentur unus aut duo seniores, qui circumeant monasterium horis, quibus vacant fratres lectioni, et videant, ne forte inveniatur frater acediosus, qui vacet otio, aut fabulis, et non sit intentus lectioni: et non solum sibi inutilis sit, sed etiam alios extollat. Hic talis, si (quod absit) repertus fuerit, corripiatur semel et secundo: si non emendaverit, correctioni regulari subjaceat, taliter, ut cæteri metum habeant. Neque frater ad fratrem jungatur horis incompetentibus.

live by the labour of their hands, as did our fathers and the Apostles. Yet let all be done with moderation, on account of the faint-hearted.

From the first of October to the beginning of Lent, let them apply to reading until the end of the second hour. Let Terce be then said, and until the ninth hour let all labour at the work that is enjoined them. When the first signal for None is given, let everyone break off from his work, and be ready as soon as the second signal is sounded. After their meal, let them occupy themselves in their reading, or in learning the Psalms. During Lent let them apply themselves to reading from morning until the end of the third hour, and then, until the end of the tenth, labour at whatever is enjoined them. And in these days of Lent let each one receive a book from the library and read it all through in order. These books are to be given out at the beginning of Lent.

Above all, let one or two seniors be appointed to go round the monastery at the hours when the brethren are engaged in reading, and see that there be no slothful brother giving himself to idleness or foolish talk, and not applying himself to his reading, so that he is thus not only useless to himself, but a distraction to others. If such a one be found (which God forbid!), let him be corrected once and a second time; and if he do not amend, let him be subjected to the chastisement of the Rule, so that the rest may be afraid. And let not one brother associate with another at unseasonable hours.

Dominico die lectioni vacent omnes; exceptis ils qui variis officiis deputati sunt. Si quis vero ita negligens et desidiosus fuerit, ut non velit, aut non possit meditari, aut legere, injungatur ei opus quod faciat, ut non vacet. Fratribus infirmis vel delicatis talis opera aut ars injungatur, ut nec otiosi sint, nec violentia laboris opprimantur, ut effugentur. Quorum imbecillitas ab Abbate consideranda est.

On Sunday let all occupy themselves in reading, except those who have been appointed to the various offices. But if anyone should be so negligent and slothful as to be either unwilling or unable to study or to read, let some task be given to him to do, that he be not idle. To brethren who are weak or delicate let there be given such work or occupation as to prevent them either from being idle, or from being so oppressed by excessive labour as to be discouraged. Their weakness must be taken into account by the Abbot.

Thoughts.

LABOUR and prayer are the two occupations of a religious. St. Basil would not allow even fasting to interfere with work. "If fasting hinders your work, it is better to eat like the workman of Christ that you are." Again he says: "Athletes, workmen of Christ, you have engaged yourselves to fight all the day, to bear all its heat. Seek not repose before its end; wait for the evening—that is to say, the end of life, the hour at which the householder shall come to reckon with you and pay you your wages."

St. Benedict insists strongly upon the necessity of labour: "Then are they truly monks if they live by the labour of their hands." The seniors are ordered to see "that no slothful brother gives himself to idleness or to foolish talk." If such a one is found wasting his time, he is to be corrected and, if necessary, punished.

The brethren are forbidden to associate with one another at unseasonable hours.

On Sundays, if any are unable or unwilling to read, some task must be given to them to keep them from idleness. The weak and delicate must be given suitable work.

St. Benedict warns us that "idleness is an enemy."

Why is it an enemy?

1. Idleness saps all manliness and vigour.

Like other bad habits, it gets a stronger and stronger hold, till in the end work of any kind becomes unspeakably irksome. It is a sad thing to see men of great talents who have frittered away their lives in futility: "Men of whom it was said, up to the age of thirty, 'they are going to do great things'; between thirty and forty, 'they can do great things if they only apply'; and after forty, 'they *might have done* great things'" (Mrs. Craigie). We all have had talents of some kind given to us, and we can all trade with them for Our Lord. There is always plenty to be done even by the least gifted, provided we are spiritual men and workers.

It is a dreadful thing to miss opportunities—dreadful for us and dreadful for others.

2. Idleness is the cause of unhappiness.

Unless life is full of interest, a man becomes self-centred, and therefore discontented and unhappy.

He will probably have many supposed grievances, and be full of vain aspirations and imaginings.

3. Idleness is a fruitful source of impure thoughts.

Nothing purifies a life more quickly and effectually than a fresh stream of interest and energy. The Eastern monks used to say that if a man works he has only one enemy, but if he is idle he has number-

less foes. Most evils, both of body and soul, are cured by hard, assiduous work.

Work, work hard! Do something! Do not stagnate!

Beware of wasting time!

Father Faber ("Spiritual Conferences," section 2): "Wasting time is the fault of almost numberless varieties of lives. Nearly every man has his own way of wasting time. Idling, dawdling, frittering, gossiping, dreaming, procrastinating, sleeping, recreating, playing with our work, trivial activity—these are only some of the common forms of wasting time."

Also "On a Taste for Reading":

"Listlessness is a dangerous enemy of devotion, especially to those living in the world who have not the help of an always pressing Rule, and the soft, uninterrupted pulsation of community acts. A vacant hour is the devil's hour. When time hangs heavy, the wings of the spirit flap painfully and slow. Then it is that a book is a strong tower."

Père Grou gives the following rules for the use of time:

1. Resolve to make use of each moment which God gives you.

2. Never put off to a future time, which you cannot promise yourself, what you can and ought to do now.

3. Never give to frivolous amusement, useless occupation, or to simple idleness, the time which is so precious.

Prayer.

"Why standest thou all the day idle?"

Alas! Lord, the day is far spent, and I have done little.

Thou hast hired me, O Lord.

I must and will work for Thee:

In labore manuum, in lectione divina. With my hands by active works, with my mind by holy reading.

How much good I could do for Thee, for myself, and for others, if I were zealous!

Inimica est. Idleness, O my soul, is a dangerous enemy to thee.

Occupari debent. Occupy thyself at all times with works for thy Master.

Body and soul, thou belongest to Him.

"Then shall I be truly a monk when I live by my labour."

My monastic spirit will perish unless I labour.

Frater acediosus. May I never, O Lord, be slothful, or given to idleness, or to foolish talking.

"I must work the works of Him Who sent Me whilst it is day" (John ix. 4).

"This is the acceptable time; this is the day of salvation."

Help me, O Lord, to rouse myself.

Give me a love of holy reading.

Fire me with zeal for the souls of others.

CHAPTER XLIX

OF THE OBSERVANCE OF LENT

Text.

Licet omni tempore vita monachi Quadragesimæ debeat observationem habere; tamen quia paucorum est ista virtus, ideo suademus istis diebus Quadragesimæ omni puritate vitam suam custodire, omnes pariter negligentias aliorum temporum his diebus sanctis diluere. Quod tunc digne fit, si ab omnibus vitiis nos temperamus: orationi cum fletibus, lectioni, et compunctioni cordis, atque abstinentiæ operam demus. Ergo his diebus augeamus nobis aliquid ad solitum pensum servitutis nostræ: orationes peculiares, ciborum et potus abstinentiam, ut unusquisque super mensuram sibi indictam aliquid propria voluntate cum gaudio Sancti Spiritus offerat Deo: id est, subtrahat corpori suo de cibo, de potu, de somno, de loquacitate, de scurrilitate, et cum spiritualis desiderii gaudio sanctum Pascha expectet. Hoc ipsum tamen, quod unusquisque offert, Abbati suo suggerat, et cum ejus fiat oratione et voluntate: quia quod sine permissione

Although the life of a monk ought at all times to have about it a Lenten character, yet, since few have strength enough for this, we exhort all, at least during the days of Lent, to keep themselves in all purity of life, and to wash away, during that holy season, the negligences of other times. This we shall worthily do if we refrain from all sin, and give ourselves to prayer with tears, to holy reading, compunction of heart, and abstinence. In these days, then, let us add something to our wonted service — as private prayers and abstinence from food and drink—so that every one of his own free will may offer to God, with joy of the Holy Spirit, something beyond the measure appointed him: withholding from his body somewhat of his food, drink, and sleep, refraining from talk and mirth, and awaiting Holy Easter with the joy of spiritual longing. Let each one, however, make known to his Abbot what he offereth, and let it be done with

Patris spiritualis fit, præsumptioni deputabitur et vanæ gloriæ, non mercedi. Ergo cum voluntate Abbatis omnia agenda sunt.

his blessing and permission; because what is done without leave of the spiritual Father shall be imputed to presumption and vainglory, and merit no reward. Everything, therefore, is to be done with the approval of the Abbot.

Thoughts.

THOUGH concessions have been granted to weak human nature, yet, in St. Benedict's opinion, the proper life for a monk is that which has a "Lenten character." In other words, our Founder would rejoice if we were to turn our lives into a perpetual Lent. This would be a fitting thing to do. "At any rate," St. Benedict says, "lead the real monastic life during Lent; pay the debts you owe to God; strive for purity of life, and wash away the negligences of other times; daily exercise yourselves in custody of heart, fervent prayers, holy reading, abiding sorrow for sin, and mortification of the appetite; add something of your own will to your wonted service of God, as extra private prayers, greater abstinence from food and drink; and restrict your talk, mirth, and sleep."

In all these practices we are warned to beware of vainglory. We see from this enactment how fearful St. Benedict is of self-love and pride creeping in under the guise of virtue. All that the monk does, however high and noble, must be safeguarded by obedience. At every turn, then, he must feel the blessed yoke of subjection pressing upon him. Perfect submission to the will of the Superior is the great

safeguard. To follow his will is to follow the will of God.

"Turn ye even to Me, saith the Lord, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garment" (Joel ii. 12, 13).

Let us be zealous, then, in these days, for interior and exterior mortification—"with all our hearts and with fasting." If we cannot keep the strict fast during the whole of Lent, we must "love fasting," and penance ourselves in other ways. "Fasting is the feast of the soul, and the food of the mind, the life of angels, the death of sin, the cutting out of vices, the root of grace, the foundation of chastity" (St. Ambrose).

"He who remembers to have committed illicit actions, let him abstain from lawful ones" (St. Augustine).

The chief end to be aimed at in Lent is the proper doing of duty. We are taught this in these days of penance by overcoming our natural inclinations with regard to lawful things. This voluntary mortification gives us a power of self-control, and makes us strong when unlawful inclinations arise.

Prayer.

"Do penance, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Matt. iv. 17).

"Unless ye do penance, ye shall all perish" (Luke xiii. 3).

To gain heaven, to avoid hell, penance is necessary for thee.

Compunctioni cordis. Bow down, O my soul, in deep compunction for thy sins.

Negligentias diluere. Wash away with thy tears the negligences of past days.

Omni puritate. Keep thyself now in all purity of life.

Be thou Emmanuel! Be with us during the days of Lent.

Thou, dear Lord, didst weep over our sins.

Thou didst withdraw into the desert and didst fast for forty days.

Take me with Thee. Encourage me by Thy example.

"Christ, therefore, having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sins" (1 Pet. iv. 1).

Gal. v. 4. "Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its vices and concupiscences."

Retire, then, with Jesus into the desert.

Orationi cum fletibus. Weep over your past sins. Bewail them with bitter grief.

Matins Hymn for Lent.

Now with the slow-revolving year
  Again the feast we greet,
Which in its mystic circle moves
  Of forty days complete.

That fast, by Law and Prophets taught,
  By Jesus Christ restored—
Jesus, of seasons and of times
  The Maker and the Lord.

Henceforth more sparing let us be
Of food, of words, of sleep;
Henceforth beneath a stricter guard
The roving senses keep.

And let us shun whatever things
Distract the careless heart;
And let us shut our souls against
The tyrant tempter's art.

And weep before the Judge, and strive
His vengeance to appease,
Saying to him with contrite voice
Upon our bended knees:

"Much have we sinn'd, O Lord! and still
We sin each day we live;
Yet look in pity from on high,
And of Thy grace forgive."

"Feed me, O Lord, with the food of tears, and give me to drink of tears in measure" (Ps. lxxix. 6).

CHAPTER L

OF THE BRETHREN WHO ARE WORKING AT A DISTANCE FROM THE ORATORY, OR ARE ON A JOURNEY

Text.

Fratres qui omnino longe sunt in labore aut in via, et non possunt occurrere hora competenti ad Oratorium, et Abbas hoc perpendit, quia ita est, agant ibidem Opus Dei, ubi operantur, cum tremore divino flectentes genua. Similiter qui in itinere directi sunt, non eos prætereant horæ constitutæ: sed ut possunt, agant sibi, et servitutis pensum non negligant reddere.

Let the brethren who are at work at a great distance, or on a journey, and cannot come to the Oratory at the proper time (the Abbot judging such to be the case), perform the work of God there, where they are labouring, in godly fear and on bended knees. In like manner, let not those who are sent on a journey allow the appointed hours to pass by, but, as far as they can, observe them by themselves, and not neglect to fulfil their obligation of divine service.

Thoughts.

ST. BENEDICT wishes the monk who is away from his monastery to recite the Divine Office at the same time and in the same spirit as it is said in the monastery. This daily practice will join an individual to his brethren, and make him remember that he is one of a family. It will teach him that he must keep alive his community spirit if he wishes still to participate in those blessings and helps which

come from a community life and from common prayer. He must love and appreciate the virtues taught by the community life, valuing the ever-present yoke of daily obedience, and desiring to live by rule, lest the spirit of independence grow up in him again. Thus the monk, even when duty calls him outside the monastery, will remain in spirit within it. He will look on it as his home, on its community as a band of brothers ever helping him by their prayers and good works, and on the life led within it as the standard for his own observance. He will thus be the monk in whatever circumstances he may be placed, and the monastic life which has formed him will continue to give him that spirit of self-sacrifice, of true large-mindedness, gentleness, and patience, which come from a lifelong training in subordinating personal interests to those of others, and in studying the happiness of others.

The Divine Office is the most distinctive community act. Its proper performance demands self-denial, obedience, fervour. These qualities should be found also in the private recitation of a religious separated from the choir. He should look upon himself as still occupying a stall, and unite his prayer with that of his brethren. In order, then, to perform this duty of his state devoutly, he should—

1. Choose a suitable place in which to say it, in order to avoid distractions.

2. He should say the Divine Office at the proper times. "Let them not allow the appointed hours to pass by."

3. He should recite it "devoutly, with godly fear," and St. Benedict adds "on bended knees."

In other words, there should be interior devotion and the fear of God's presence, and also exterior reverence of posture.

Prayer.

"If thou wishest to be comforted from Heaven, flee men and news of the world.

"Be willingly alone with the Lord; and seek solace within, in devout prayers and holy meditations.

"Nothing is more wholesome, nothing sweeter, nothing more pleasant, than to praise God in hymns and psalms:

"And to have the heart aloft with the angels in heaven, leaving aside all things below.

"'Truly the Lord is in this place; this is naught else but the house of God and the gate of heaven.'

"Open to me the gates, ye holy angels.

"I will sing with you the name of the Lord my God for ever and ever.

"Woe to him who there is silent, and sleeps where he ought to watch and pray.

"Woe to the idle and dissolute, who look round the walls with roving eyes, and heed not the sweet psalms!

"Blessed all religious and devout servants of God, cheerful in divine worship:

"Studious in reading, who restrain themselves and others from light words!

"To do aught negligently in the Divine Office will not go unpunished.

"Take care, and fear lest the alms cry out against you that they have been ill-spent; and the Hours often heedlessly recited and accomplished" (Thomas à Kempis, Serm. XXVIII. ad Novitios).

May I never forget that I am a monk.

When outside the monastery, obedience and poverty are not less but more necessary to me.

May I cling to them as my great safeguards amid the distractions of the world.

May I ever unite myself in spirit with the great common prayer.

May the many imperfections of my prayer be swallowed up in the great chorus of prayer which rises up from my brethren.

They unite themselves with me by their prayer for the absent brethren.

May I unite my prayer with theirs!

CHAPTER LI

OF THE BRETHREN WHO GO NOT VERY FAR OFF

Text.

Fratres qui pro quovis responso proficiscuntur, et ea die sperant reverti ad monasterium, non præsumant foris manducare, etiamsi a quovis rogentur: nisi forte eis ab Abbate suo præcipiatur. Quod si aliter fecerint, excommunicentur.

Let not the brother who is sent out on any business, and hopeth to return that same day to the monastery, presume to eat while abroad, even although pressed by anyone to do so, unless, perchance, he have been bidden by his Abbot. If he do otherwise, let him be excommunicated.

CHAPTER LII

OF THE ORATORY OF THE MONASTERY

Text.

Oratorium hoc sit, quod dicitur: nec ibi quicquam aliud geratur, aut condatur. Expleto opere Dei omnes cum summo silentio exeant, et habeatur reverentia Deo; ut frater, qui forte sibi peculiariter vult orare, non impediatur alterius improbitate. Sed si alter vult sibi forte secretius orare, simpliciter intret et oret; non in clamosa voce, sed in lacrymis, et intentione cordis. Ergo qui simile opus [illegible], non permittatur, ex-

Let the Oratory be what it is called, a place of prayer; and let nothing else be done or kept there. When the work of God is ended, let all go out with the utmost silence, paying due reverence to God, so that a brother, who perchance wishes to pray by himself, may not be hindered by another's misconduct. If anyone desire to pray in private, let him go in quietly and pray, not with a loud voice, but with tears and fervour of

pleto opere Dei, remorari in Oratorio, sicut dictum est, ne alius impedimentum patiatur.

heart. And let it not be permitted, as we have said, to remain in the Oratory when the work of God is finished, except it be for a like purpose, lest hindrance be caused to others.

Thoughts.

THE Church should be the heart of a religious house. It is the "praying-place"—a place to be held sacred, a place to which a soul may retire to commune with its Lord and Master. The Oratory must be a place of the "greatest silence"—a silence arising from the reverence due to God, and a silence not merely of tongue, but a silence of awe and reverence in the Divine Presence. It is there that the monk's Friend and Master lives—the Lord Whom he has chosen as his portion for ever. It is there, too, that the gifts of grace are most abundant. The monk, then, should love to visit the church to commune with his Lord. It is the "praying-place" in a special sense, a place of high thoughts and spiritual refreshment. In all simplicity should he enter and pour forth the aspirations of his soul, and pray for the help and blessing of his Master. There must be no "show" of devotion, no ecstatic attitudes, but the simplicity of a humble heart. Nor need the prayer be long, but rather "intense"—"intentione cordis."

A few moments of real earnest union of the will with our Lord is worth more than a much longer prayer which is less real and heart-felt.

Prayer.

"O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like Thee in heaven nor in earth: Who keepest covenant and mercy with Thy servants that walk before Thee with all their hearts. . . .

"Is it credible then that God should dwell with men on the earth? If heaven and the heavens of heavens do not contain Thee, how much less this house, which I have built?

"But to this end only it is made, that Thou mayst regard the prayer of Thy servant and supplication, O Lord my God: and mayst hear the prayers which Thy servant poureth out before Thee.

"That thou mayst open Thy eyes upon this house day and night, upon the place wherein Thou hast promised that Thy name should be called upon, and that thou wouldst hear the prayer which Thy servant prayeth in it: hearken then to the prayers of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel.

"Whosoever shall pray in this place hear Thou from Thy dwelling-place, that is, from heaven, and show mercy. . . .

If Thy people Israel be overcome by their enemies (for they will sin against Thee), and being converted shall do penance, and call upon Thy Name, and pray to Thee in this place, then hear Thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and bring them back into the land which Thou gavest to them

"Let Thy eyes, I beseech Thee, be open, and let Thy ears be attentive to the prayer that is made in this place.

"Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into Thy resting-place, Thou and the ark of Thy strength.

"Let Thy priests, O Lord God, put on salvation, and Thy saints rejoice in good things" (II. Paral., vi. *passim*).

Oratorium sit quod dicitur. "Thy house, O Lord, shall be a house of prayer to me."

Secretius orare. In all humility I will come to speak to Thee in secret.

Non in clamosa voce sed in lacrymis. Not with many words, O Lord, but with many tears; not merely approaching near to the altar, but rather to the altar's God.

Humility and compunction will bring me near to Thee.

"Oh, how full of dread is this place! Truly this is no other than the house of God and the gate of heaven."

CHAPTER LIII

OF RECEIVING GUESTS

Text.

Omnes supervenientes hospites tamquam Christus suscipiantur, quia ipse dicturus est: "*Hospes fui, et suscepistis me.*" Et omnibus congruus honor exhibeatur, maxime tamen domesticis fidei, et peregrinis. Ut ergo nuntiatus fuerit hospes, occurratur ei a Priore vel a fratribus, cum omni officio caritatis: et primitus orent pariter, et sic sibi socientur in pace. Quod pacis osculum non prius offeratur, nisi oratione præmissa, propter illusiones diabolicas. In ipsa autem salutatione omnis exhibeatur humilitas. Omnibus venientibus sive discedentibus hospitibus, inclinato capite, vel prostrato omni corpore in terra, Christus in eis adoretur, qui et suscipitur.

Suscepti autem hospites ducantur ad orationem, et postea sedeat cum eis Prior, aut cui jusserit ipse. Legatur coram hospite lex divina, ut ædificetur, et post hæc omnis ei exhibeatur humanitas. Jejunium a Priore

Let all guests that come be received like Christ Himself, for He will say: "I was a stranger, and ye took Me in." And let fitting honour be shown to all, especially to such as are of the household of the faith, and to strangers. When, therefore, a guest is announced, let him be met by the Superior or the brethren with all due charity. Let them first pray together, and thus associate with one another in peace; but the kiss of peace must not be offered until after prayer, on account of the delusions of the devil. In this salutation let all humility be shown. At the arrival or departure of all guests, let Christ —Who indeed is received in their persons—be adored in them by bowing the head, or even prostrating on the ground.

When the guests have been received, let them be led to prayer, and then let the Superior, or anyone he may appoint, sit with them. The law of God is to be read before the guest for his edification, and afterwards

frangatur propter hospitem; nisi forte præcipuus sit ille dies jejunii, qui non possit violari. Fratres autem consuetudines jejuniorum prosequantur. Aquam in manibus Abbas hospitibus det; pedes hospitibus omnibus tam Abbas, quam cuncta congregatio lavet; quibus lotis, hunc versum dicant: "*Suscepimus, Deus, misericordiam tuam, in medio templi tui.*" Pauperum autem, et peregrinorum maxime, susceptio omni cura sollicite exhibeatur: quia in ipsis magis Christus suscipitur. Nam divitum terror ipse sibi exigit honorem.

Coquina Abbatis et hospitum per se sit, ut incertis horis supervenientes hospites, qui nunquam desunt monasterio, non inquietent fratres. In quam coquinam ingrediantur duo fratres ad annum, qui ipsum officium bene impleant. Quibus, ut indigent, solatia administrentur, ut absque murmuratione serviant: et iterum quando occupationem minorem habent, exeant, ubi eis imperatur, in opera. Et non solum in ipsis, sed et in omnibus officiis monasterii ista sit consideratio; ut quando indigent, solatia accommodentur eis: et iterum quando vacant, obediant imperatis.

Item et cellam hospitum habeat assignatam frater, cujus animam timor Dei possidet; ubi sint lecti strati sufficienter, et domus Dei a sapientibus sapienter administretur. Hospitilet all kindness be shown him. The Superior may break his fast for the sake of the guest, unless it happen to be a principal fast-day, which may not be broken. The brethren, however, shall observe their accustomed fasting. Let the Abbot pour water on the hands of the guests, and himself, as well as the whole community, wash their feet, after which let them say this verse: "We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy temple." Let special care be taken in the reception of the poor and of strangers, because in them Christ is more truly welcomed, for the very fear men have of the rich procures them honour.

Let the kitchen for the Abbot and guests be apart by itself, so that strangers, who are never wanting in a monastery, may not disturb the brethren by coming at unlooked-for hours. Let two brothers, who are well able to fulfil the duty, be placed in this kitchen for a year; and let help be afforded them as they require it, so that they may serve without murmuring. When they have not much to occupy them there, let them go forth to other work, wherever they may be bidden. And not only with regard to them, but in all the offices of the monastery, let there be such consideration shown, that when there is need of help it may be given them; and that when they are without work they do whatever they are commanded.

Let the care of the guest-house also be entrusted to a brother whose soul is possessed with the fear of God. Let there be sufficient beds prepared there, and let the house of God be wisely

bus autem, cui non præcipitur, nullatenus societur neque colloquatur: sed si obviaverit aut viderit, salutatis humiliter, ut dictum est, et petita benedictione, pertranseat dicens sibi non licere colloqui cum hospite.

governed by prudent men. Let no one, except he be bidden, on any account associate or converse with the guests. But if he chance to meet or to see them, after humbly saluting them, as we have said, and asking their blessing, let him pass on, saying that he is not permitted to talk with a guest.

Thoughts.

(A) THE SUPERNATURAL VIEW.

THE first section of this chapter shows us how real the supernatural should be to a religious. Christ is very near to him. His service of others is the service of Christ; when he shows marks of honour to others, he adores Christ. In fact, Christ is all in all to him.

This is nothing else but the teaching of the Gospel.

Read St. Matthew, chapter xxv., verses 34, 46:

"Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me."

"Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to Me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just into life everlasting."

We must, then, try to be supernatural in our motives when showing charity to others.

(B) THE TREATMENT OF GUESTS.

Before all other forms of hospitality stands the duty of edification. We cannot edify our guests now in the way suggested by St. Benedict, but we

can edify them by our behaviour and manner of speech. The guest must feel that he is in a religious house, and with those who care first, and above all, for the things of God. Keeping this in mind, then show the guests all kindness. So important is this duty of hospitality that the private and less weighty regulations of the Rule are to give way before it. How tactful and broad-minded St. Benedict is!

To serve a guest is an honour to the Abbot and his community, for Christ Himself is served in him.

The purity of motive which prompts this service becomes more obvious if the guest is poor or unknown, and therefore does not receive the attention for his own sake.

"We have received Thy mercy, O Lord," in thus being able to serve Thee.

(C) Guests and the Discipline of the Community.

St. Benedict, whilst caring for the comfort of his guests, is anxious that the discipline and quiet of the monastery shall be safeguarded. On no account may a brother associate or converse with the guests, unless bidden to do so. He must inform guests of this rule if accosted by them. Like the cellarer, the guest-master is one who has to hold much converse with the outside world. St. Benedict, therefore, wishes one to be appointed who is filled with the fear of God. He must also be prudent and possessed of forethought, so that the guests may never be neglected.

Prayer.

A.

Omnes hospites tamquam Christus suscipiantur.

Thou, dear Lord, dost come to us with every guest.

What honour is, therefore, due to them!

Not for the man's sake, but for Thine, the God-Man.

Inclinato capite.

Bow, then, thy head before every creature.

Prostrato corpore.

Prostrate thyself in spirit.

Christus in eis adoretur.

Show fitting honour to Jesus Christ.

My Lord, may we ever welcome Thee!

Thou comest to us as a poor man:

I will serve Thee, feed and clothe Thee.

Thou comest as a stranger:

I will be Thy friend.

When I go to the strange land beyond the grave,

Welcome me, dear Lord.

Be a friend to me; seat me at Thy banquet.

If I serve my fellow-creatures, Thou wilt reward me.

My service is to Thee, and not to them.

B.

Luke xxiv. 30, 31.

"Thou didst take bread and blessed and brake and gave to Thy disciples, and their eyes were opened and they knew Thee."

Ut ædificetur.

Teach me how to profit the soul whilst caring for the body.

May I open the eyes of those I serve.
May I teach them how to know Thee.

C.

Timor Dei. "Serve ye the Lord with fear."
"Fill my flesh with Thy fear."

Save me from a worldly spirit, O Lord.

"All the allurements of the world have I despised for the love of my Lord Jesus Christ."

"Worldly rumours," says St. Bernard, "fill the ear, but empty the mind."

CHAPTER LIV

WHETHER A MONK OUGHT TO RECEIVE LETTERS OR TOKENS

Text.

Nullatenus liceat monacho nec a parentibus suis, nec a quoquam hominum, nec sibi invicem litteras, aut eulogias, vel quælibet munuscula accipere aut dare, sine præcepto Abbatis sui. Quod si etiam a parentibus suis ei quicquam directum fuerit, non præsumat suscipere illud, nisi prius indicatum fuerit Abbati. Quod si jusserit suscipi, in Abbatis sit potestate, cui illud jubeat dari: et non contristetur frater, cui forte directum fuerat, ut non detur occasio diabolo. Qui autem aliter præsumpserit, disciplinæ regulari subjaceat.

By no means let a monk be allowed to receive, either from his parents or anyone else, or from his brethren, letters or tokens, or any gifts whatsoever, or to give them to others, without the permission of the Abbot. And if anything be sent him, even by his parents, let him not presume to receive it until it hath been made known to the Abbot. But even if the Abbot order it to be received, it shall be in his power to bid it to be given to whom he pleaseth; and let not the brother to whom it may have been sent be grieved, lest occasion be given to the devil. Should anyone, however, presume to act otherwise, let him be subjected to the discipline of the Rule.

Thoughts.

THE law of asking permissions for little things is, without doubt, felt by some to be vexatious and unreasonable. "What is the use of these little restric-

tions?" they say. "A general permission for little things that we need would not be against poverty, and would save much trouble."

This is not the correct way of looking at the question. For why have we taken upon ourselves the vow of poverty? Was it merely to deprive ourselves of certain things, or not rather to cure our attachment to all earthly things? Is not the vow of poverty the sword which is to sever all that ties us to earth, so that we may mount to heaven?

Attachment can only be shown by a religious in little ways, and detachment can only be gained by little restraints. Little things attract us, make us selfish, and give us the feeling of "proprietorship." The spirit of poverty can best be gained by the exercise of poverty in little ways, and it is precisely to help us to acquire this spirit that we have to ask permission even for little things. This constant need of asking permission keeps clearly before our minds the fact, too easily forgotten, that we have separated ourselves by vow from the things of the world. Just as the spirit of obedience is learned and safeguarded by the little daily exercises of obedience, so the spirit of poverty and detachment is gained and safeguarded by faithful obedience to the restrictions imposed by Rule to teach us poverty.

St. Benedict further points out that we have no *rights* except to what is necessary—no rights because friends have sent something to us, or because we have earned or saved something.

Prayer.

To give up all things for Thy sake, dear Lord, is to free myself from cares.

In possessing Thee, I possess all things.

Give me a spiritual disgust for the things of earth.

Detach me from all that passes away.

May I ever love and value the restrictions of my Rule.

Give me a deep love for holy poverty.

May I ever find my delight in Thee.

To Thee, O Lord, will I look in my needs.

Sine præcepto Abbatis. Never will I receive anything except from Thy hands, or by Thy will as manifested by my Superior.

CHAPTER LV

OF THE CLOTHES AND SHOES OF THE BRETHREN

Text.

Vestimenta fratribus secundum locorum qualitatem ubi habitant, vel aerum temperiem dentur, quia in frigidis regionibus amplius indigetur, in calidis vero minus. Hæc ergo consideratio penes Abbatem sit. Nos tamen mediocribus locis sufficere credimus monachis per singulos cucullam et tunicam: cucullam in hyeme villosam; in æstate puram et vetustam, et scapulare propter opera: indumenta pedum, pedules et caligas. De quarum rerum omnium colore aut grossitudine non causentur monachi, sed quales inveniri possunt in provincia, qua degunt, aut quod vilius comparari potest.

Abbas autem de mensura provideat, ut non sint curta ipsa vestimenta utentibus eis, sed mensurata. Accipientes nova, vetera semper reddant in præsenti, reponenda in vestiario propter pauperes. Sufficit enim monacho duas tunicas et duas cucullas habere propter noctes, et propter lavare ipsas res. Jam quod supra fuerit, superfluum est, et amputari debet. Et pedules, et quodcumque est vetus-

Let clothing be given to the brethren suitable to the nature and climate of the place where they live; for in cold countries more is required, in warm countries less. This must therefore be considered by the Abbot. We think, however, that in temperate climates a cowl and a tunic should suffice for each monk; the cowl to be of thick stuff in winter, but in summer something worn or thin; likewise a scapular for work, and shoes and stockings to cover their feet. And let not the monks complain of the colour or coarseness of these things, but let them be such as can be got in the country where they live, or can be bought most cheaply.

Let the Abbot be careful about the size of the garments, that they be not too short for those who wear them, but of the proper length. When they receive new clothes, let them always give up the old ones at once, to be put by in the wardrobe for the poor. For it is sufficient for a monk to have two tunics and two cowls for wearing at night, and also for washing; whatever is over and above this is superfluous,

tum, reddant, dum accipiunt novum. Femoralia hi qui diriguntur in via, de vestiario accipiant: qui revertentes lota ibi restituant. Et cucullæ et tunicæ sint aliquanto his, quas habere soliti sunt, modice meliores; quas exeuntes in viam accipiant de vestiario, et revertentes restituant.

and ought to be cut off. In the same way let them give up their shoes, and whatever else is worn out, when they receive new ones. Let those who are sent on a journey receive drawers from the wardrobe, and on their return restore them washed. Their cowls and tunics also, which are to be a little better than those they ordinarily wear, let them receive from the wardrobe when setting out on their journey, and give them back on their return.

Stramenta autem lectorum sufficiant, matta, sagum, lena et capitale. Quæ tamen lecta frequenter ab Abbate scrutanda sunt, propter opus peculiare, ne inveniatur. Et si cui inventum fuerit, quod ab Abbate non acceperit, gravissimæ disciplinæ subjaceat. Et ut hoc vitium peculiare radicitus amputetur, dentur ab Abbate omnia quæ sunt necessaria; id est, cuculla, tunica, pedules, caligæ, bracile, cultellus, graphium, acus, mappula, tabulæ, ut omnis auferatur necessitatis excusatio. A quo tamen Abbate semper consideretur illa sententia Actuum Apostolorum: quia "*dabatur singulis, prout cuique opus erat.*" Ita ergo et Abbas consideret infirmitatem indigentium, et non malam voluntatem invidentium. In omnibus tamen judiciis suis Dei retributionem cogitet.

For their bedding let a straw mattress, blanket, coverlet, and pillow suffice. These beds must be frequently inspected by the Abbot, to see if any private property be discovered therein. And if anyone should be found to have anything which he hath not received from the Abbot, let him be subjected to the most severe discipline. In order that this vice of private ownership may be rooted out entirely, let the Abbot provide them with all necessaries — that is, a cowl, tunic, shoes, stockings, girdle, knife, pen, needle, handkerchief, and tablets—so that all plea of wanting anything may be taken away. Yet let the Abbot always be mindful of the words of the Acts of the Apostles: "Distribution was made to every one, according as he had need." Let him, therefore, consider the infirmities of such as are in want, and not the ill-will of the envious. Nevertheless, in all his judgments, let him think of the retribution of God.

Thoughts.

We notice in this chapter, as in Chapters XXXIX. and XL., how St. Benedict hesitates to legislate for

the personal needs of others. He gives broad principles of guidance, and leaves their application to the Abbot—"Hæc consideratio penes Abbatem est."

These principles are:

1. That the clothing be *sufficient*, "suitable to the nature and climate where they live."

2. *Simple and Cheap.*—Dom Adam Hamilton, in the *Dublin Review*, January, 1887, says that the whole text points to the conclusion that the garments used were those of the Italian peasants of the day—a conclusion confirmed by the names of the garments.

The clothes of the monks were those of the labouring man, and not of the rich, and were such as could be got cheaply.

"The monks must not complain" at this, but remember their vow of poverty, and why they took that vow upon themselves, and rejoice when it presses, and really mortifies and detaches them.

3. *Becoming.*—The clothes must fit, and be put aside for the poor before they are in rags.

4. *Clean.*—Two tunics, etc., are to be given to the monks—"propter lavare ipsas res."

It is related of St. Bernard that poverty in dress always pleased him, but never dirt, for this was, he considered, a sign of a soul that was negligent or seeking for the notice of men.

The Superior must consider the necessities of each member of his community, and, disregarding the criticisms of the envious, "make distribution according to the needs." This considerate treatment will do away with any excuse for private property.

The "vice of private ownership must be rooted out." In Chapter XXXIII. we read: "This vice of private ownership is, above all, to be cut out by the roots," and St. Benedict calls it "hoc nequissimum vitium."

How strict St. Benedict is about holy poverty!

How strict, then, must we be!

Prayer.

I am a labourer in Thy vineyard, my Lord!

Grossitudine. Must I not expect what is coarse?

I must be an alien from the world.

I desire to lead the life of poverty, O my Master.

Scapulare propter opera. Put on my shoulders the yoke of hard work.

Teach me to love simple and poor living.

I have resigned to Thee all the luxuries of life.

Superfluum amputari debet. Cut off, then, O religious soul, all that is superfluous.

Make this a rule of your life.

Radicitus amputetur. Root out of my soul, dear Lord, the very desire of possessing.

May I love to have less rather than more;

To be without rather than to have;

To have less of earth, that I may have more of Thee.

Detach me wholly from this earth.

Give me the wings of holy poverty,

And I will fly away to Thee.

Blessed indeed are the poor in spirit!

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Fear not, my son; we lead indeed a poor life, but we have many good things if we fear God" (Tobias iv. 23).

CHAPTER LVI

OF THE ABBOT'S TABLE

Text.

Mensa Abbatis cum hospitibus et peregrinis sit semper. Quoties tamen minus sunt hospites, quos vult de fratribus vocare, in ipsius sit potestate. Seniorum autem unum, aut duos semper cum fratribus dimittendos procuret, propter disciplinam.

Let the table of the Abbot be always with the guests and strangers. But as often as there are few guests, it shall be in his power to invite any of the brethren. Let him take care, however, always to leave one or two seniors with the brethren for the sake of discipline.

CHAPTER LVII

OF THE ARTIFICERS OF THE MONASTERY

Text.

Artifices, si sunt in monasterio, cum omni humilitate et reverentia faciant ipsas artes, si tamen jusserit Abbas. Quod si aliquis ex eis extollitur pro scientia artis suæ, eo quod videatur aliquid conferre monasterio, hic talis evellatur ab ipsa arte, et denuo per eam non transeat, nisi forte humiliato ei iterum Abbas jubeat.

Should there be artificers in the monastery, let them work at their crafts in all humility and reverence, if the Abbot give permission. But if any of them be puffed up by reason of his knowledge of his craft, in that he seemeth to confer some benefit on the monastery, let such a one be taken from it, and not exercise it again, unless, perchance, when he hath humbled himself, the Abbot bid him work at it anew.

Si quid vero ex operibus artificum venumdandum est, videant ipsi, per quorum manus transigenda sunt, ne aliquam fraudem præsumant inferre. Memorentur semper Ananiæ et Saphiræ: ne forte mortem quam illi in corpore pertulerunt, hanc isti, vel omnes qui aliquam fraudem de rebus monasterii fecerint, in anima patiantur. In ipsis autem pretiis non surripiat avaritiæ malum, sed semper aliquantulum vilius detur, quam a secularibus datur, ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus.

And if any of the work of the artificers is to be sold, let those by whom the business is done see that they defraud not the monastery. Let them ever be mindful of Ananias and Saphira, lest perchance they, and all who deal fraudulently with the goods of the monastery, should suffer in their souls the death which these incurred in their body. But with regard to the prices of such things, let not the vice of avarice creep in, but let them always be sold a little cheaper than by men in the world, that God may be glorified in all things.

Thoughts.

A RELIGIOUS is in his monastery with one object only—to become a spiritual man.

Nothing must interfere with this. The monastery must do without a monk's work if that work is spoiling his religious spirit. There is always danger of this when there is eminence in some kind of work, and at the same time a character not big enough to stand success.

It is better then, both for the monastery and for the individual, that he should be removed from that work, however useful and skilled he may be.

If, however, work is done in the spirit of obedience and humility, it will further the spirituality of the worker. The art of arts in the monastery is to know how to do all work in such a way as to deepen mortification and prayer. We are religious first and all else afterwards.

Recall how St. Philip trained Baronius, lest his

studies should spoil his spirituality. For years he steadily humbled him, crossing his will at every turn, and giving him the most menial offices.

Banish, then, from the monastery merely utilitarian and economical views of a subject's worth.

Care, above all things, for the religious spirit of the monks.

Prayer.

"Amice, ad quid venisti?"

I have come, dear Lord, to serve Thee.

I have come to conquer myself.

I must remember my aim in all my works.

They must be done for Thee and against self.

Cum omni humilitate. Si permiserit Abbas. "With all humility!" "With all obedience!"

My only desire is to work for Thee.

It matters not what work Thou givest me to do.

The most menial work is ennobled when done for Thee.

What does it matter where I am placed,

Or what work obedience puts upon me?

"In omnibus glorificetur Deus!"

Sanctify me, dear Lord, by my work.

Deepen my spirit of mortification and prayer.

Save me from the crime of Ananias and Saphira.

May I never keep back part of what I have promised to Thee.

Acts v. 4. "Thou hast lied not to men, but to God."

How terrible a charge!

"And a great fear came on all that heard these things."

All of mine is Thine.

May I never retract this my offering!

"In all things may God be glorified!"

This is the motto of the Order.

May it be the motto of my life!

CHAPTER LVIII

OF THE DISCIPLINE OF RECEIVING BRETHREN INTO RELIGION

Text.

Noviter veniens quis ad conversionem, non ei facilis tribuatur ingressus: sed sicut ait Apostolus: "*Probate spiritus, si ex Deo sunt.*" Ergo si veniens perseveraverit pulsans, et illatas sibi injurias, et difficultatem ingressus, post quatuor aut quinque dies visus fuerit patienter portare, et persistere petitioni suæ, annuatur ei ingressus, et sit in cella hospitum paucis diebus.

To him that newly cometh to change his life, let not an easy entrance be granted, but, as the Apostle saith, "Try the spirits, if they be of God." If, therefore, he that cometh persevere in knocking, and after four or five days seem patiently to endure the wrongs done to him and the difficulty made about his coming in, and to persist in his petition, let entrance be granted him, and let him be in the guest-house for a few days.

Thoughts.

(A) The Postulant.

"An easy entrance is not to be granted to a new-comer"; difficulties are to be put in his way; his perseverance is to be tested; harsh treatment is to be shown him, to "prove the spirit, if it be of God."

It is very important that a new-comer should commence his religious life with correct views. It must

be impressed upon him that he is not conferring an honour upon the Order by joining it; that it is a great privilege to be admitted to the Order; that he must show his earnestness by enduring the trials by which the Order proves his sincerity. If the newcomer is prepared to be tested and to learn in all humility, he may be admitted to the novitiate.

Prayer.

Non facilis ingressus. Thou hast, O Lord, opened the door to me.

Si ex Deo sunt. I am one of Thy family.

Probate spiritus. Is my spirit of God?

Si perseveraverit. Examine your life and prove yourself.

Illatas injurias. Have I, O Lord, persevered in my good purposes?

Have I now the spirit of patient endurance?

Alas! how many graces have I wasted!

What a rich seed-time, and what a poor harvest!

Few of my generous purposes have been fulfilled.

I am too selfish, dear Lord.

I think too much of my own pleasure and pain.

I think too little of Thee.

Make me brave in endurance, persevering in effort.

May I forget myself and think of Thee.

Help me to serve Thee faithfully whatever my inclinations may be.

Text.

Postea sit in cella novitiorum, ubi meditetur, et manducet, et dormiat.

Afterwards let him go into the novitiate, where he is to meditate and study, to take his meals and to sleep.

Et senior ei talis deputetur, qui aptus sit ad lucrandas animas, et qui super eum omnino curiose intendat et sollicitus sit, si vere Deum quærit, et si sollicitus est ad opus Dei, ad obedientiam, ad opprobria. Prædicentur ei omnia dura et aspera, per quæ itur ad Deum. Et si promiserit de stabilitatis suæ perseverantia, post duorum mensium circulum legatur ei hæc Regula per ordinem, et dicatur ei: Ecce lex, sub qua militare vis; si potes observare, ingredere: si vero non potes, liber discede. Si adhuc steterit, tunc ducatur in supradictam cellam novitiorum, et iterum probetur in omni patientia.

Et post sex mensium circulum relegatur ei Regula, ut sciat ad quod ingreditur. Et si adhuc stat, post quatuor menses iterum relegatur ei eadem regula. Et si habita secum deliberatione, promiserit se omnia custodire, et cuncta sibi imperata servare, tunc suscipiatur in congregatione, sciens se jam lege Regulæ constitutum, quod ei ex illa die non liceat egredi de monasterio, nec collum excutere de sub jugo Regulæ, quam sub tam morosa deliberatione licuit ei recusare aut suscipere.

Let a senior, one who is skilled in gaining souls, be appointed over him to watch him with the utmost care, and to see whether he is truly seeking God, and is fervent in the work of God, in obedience and in humiliations. Let all the hard and rugged paths by which we walk towards God be set before him. And if he promise steadfastly to persevere, after the lapse of two months, let this Rule be read through to him, with these words: "Behold the law, under which thou desirest to fight. If thou canst observe it, enter in; if thou canst not, freely depart." If he will stand firm, let him be taken back to the aforesaid cell of the novices, and again tried with all patience.

And, after a space of six months, let the Rule be again read to him, that he may know unto what he cometh. Should he still persevere, after four months let the same Rule be read to him once more. And if, after having well considered within himself, he promise to keep it in all things, and to observe everything that is commanded him, then let him be received into the community, knowing that he is now bound by the law of the Rule, so that from that day forward he cannot depart from the monastery, nor shake from off his neck the yoke of the Rule, which after such prolonged deliberation he was free either to refuse or to accept.

(B) The Novice and his Master.

During the novitiate, the novice must be kept apart from the others. Martène tells us that the novitiate was at first so separated as to be like a

distinct monastery. This is the mind and the law of the Church.

There are many reasons for this strict isolation of the novices.

St. Lawrence Justinian gives these reasons: "Because the mind of a young man easily becomes distracted from its purpose, and is with difficulty trained, if he is allowed to go about, to converse on various topics, and to receive several different kinds of instruction." The novice has to be safeguarded against interference. He is being trained; trials are put upon him, and the object of these may be defeated by the sympathy and condolences of tender-hearted but short-sighted individuals.

The novice is being taught habits of prayer, clear principles, and fixity of purpose. Uniformity of training is therefore essential. Amateur spiritual direction and advice, however well-meaning, confuse the learner's mind and do much harm. It is of the utmost importance, again, that the novice be made to feel that he is still but a beginner—not a full member of the community, but only on probation. It is the "master's" work to gain their souls for God. He must give to each novice "the utmost care," by patient training and by fervent prayer that God would bless the seed sown by him. The master must take all pains to find out what spirit the novice has.

Does he truly seek God? If he is really in earnest, he will, first of all, show zeal for the Divine Office and all spiritual exercises which comprise the "Opus Dei" of a religious.

He will also show eagerness for the interior mortifications of obedience and humility, for he will appreciate the fact that these virtues will more quickly overcome self-love than any other.

Prayer, obedience, and the practice of humility (humiliations) hold the highest place in the system of spirituality taught by St. Benedict.

Does the novice, then, love them and appreciate them, even though there may be some shrinking of sensitive nature?

The master must lead the novice by the hand over these hard and rugged paths, which hurt the feet so much in the beginning, till he has shown him that by this road alone can he overcome himself and come to God, and till, by his advice and example, he has accustomed him to walk in these ways. This "solicitude," or eagerness for the "dura et aspera," is the touchstone of earnestness.

"Self-denial is the test of earnestness and fervour. If you want to know whether your religion is a reality, a power in your soul governing you, and not merely a superficial feeling, here you have a test—in what does it make me deny myself? Self-denial is the measure of love" (Cardinal Newman).

"Ecce lex sub qua militare vis"—"Behold the law under which thou desirest to fight."

Each novice must know exactly the end in view, and clearly understand the means and methods of the monastic life, and the obligations it imposes upon him. The Rule must, therefore, be read through to him after two months, and then he must be tried in all patience to see if he can and will practise it,

At the end of the sixth and tenth months the Rule is to be read through to him again. Thus, during the novitiate year the novice learns the Rule thoroughly, and is practised in its observance. It is only after long deliberation that he is allowed to put the yoke of the Rule upon his shoulders. Any ignorance of the Rule in later days must, therefore, be culpable.

Notice the word "militare." To live our spiritual life—*i.e.*, to fight our way to God by means of the Rule—requires that we should know it thoroughly and use it constantly. Haeften quotes the example of a monk who always had the Rule in his hands, and was continually reading and studying it.

We have already considered the importance of using the Rule as our text-book of spirituality (*cf.* Chapter III.).

Prayer.

Senior aptus ad lucrandas animas. Thou Shepherd of souls, dear Jesus,
Gain my soul for Thyself.

Qui sollicitus sit. Watch over me with the greatest care, my kind Master.

Do I truly seek Thee? Can I say truthfully to Thee:

"My life has been and is entirely Thine"?

Here is the test, O my soul: do you deny yourself?

Dura et aspera per quæ itur ad Deum. Are you walking along the hard and rugged path which leads to God?

Si sollicitus est ad opus Dei. This path is that of prayer—
Prayer constant and fervent;
The great duty of our lives—the "Opus Dei."

Ad obedientiam. It is the road of obedience—

Exact exterior and humble interior obedience.

Ad opprobria. It is the road of humiliations—

Do you endure these patiently, value them, welcome them?

This is the road to Thee, O Jesus.

It is the way of the Cross.

Give me the spirit of prayer, of obedience, and of humility.

These virtues will enable me to carry my daily cross after Thee.

"Sequere Me!" "Follow thou Me!"

Be glad, O my soul, that self is going to its death.

Be generous! Follow thy Lord closely.

"Behold the Law under which thou desirest to fight!"

Fully did I study this law; freely did I promise obedience to it.

Have I "fought" according to its teaching?

Have I studied it, prayed upon it, tried to form myself according to its spirit?

Help me, O Lord, to make more active use of my weapons.

In the Rule are arms for all occasions.

Make me Thy skilled soldier!

Hoc collum excutere de sub, jugo regulæ. Once more I place Thy yoke upon me.

If I am generous with Thee,

"Thy yoke will be sweet and Thy burden light."

Text.

Suscipiendus autem, in Oratorio coram omnibus promittat de stabilitate sua, et conversione morum suorum, et obedientia, coram Deo et Sanctis ejus, ut si aliquando aliter fecerit, ab eo se damnandum sciat quem irridet. De qua promissione sua faciat petitionem ad nomen Sanctorum quorum Reliquiæ ibi sunt, et Abbatis præsentis. Quam petitionem manu sua scribat: aut certe, si non scit litteras, alter ab eo rogatus scribat; et ille Novitius signum faciat, et manu sua eam super altare ponat. Quam dum posuerit, incipiat ipse Novitius mox hunc versum: "*Suscipe me, Domine, secundum eloquium tuum, et vivam: et non confundas me ab exspectatione mea.*" Quem versum omnis congregatio tertio respondeat, adjungentes: "*Gloria Patri.*" Tunc ipse frater Novitius prosternatur singulorum pedibus, ut orent pro eo, et jam ex illa die in congregatione reputetur.

Res si quas habet, aut eroget prius pauperibus, aut facta solemniter donatione, conferat monasterio, nihil sibi reservans ex omnibus: quippe qui ex illo die nec proprii corporis potestatem se habiturum sciat. Mox ergo in Oratorio exuatur rebus propriis quibus vestitus est, et induatur rebus monasterii. Illa autem vestimenta, quibus exutus est, reponantur in vestiario conservanda, ut si aliquando, suadente diabolo, consenserit ut egrediatur de monasterio (quod absit), tunc exutus rebus monas-

Let him who is to be received make before all, in the Oratory, a promise of stability, conversion of life, and obedience, in the presence of God and of His Saints, so that, if he should ever act otherwise, he may know that he will be condemned by Him whom he mocketh. Let him draw up this promise in writing, in the name of the Saints whose relics are in the altar, and of the Abbot there present. And let him write it with his own hand; or at least, if he knoweth not how, let another write it at his request, and let the novice put his mark to it, and place it with his own hand upon the altar. When he hath done this, let the novice himself immediately begin this verse: "Uphold me, O Lord, according to Thy Word, and I shall live; and let me not be confounded in my expectation." And this verse let the whole community thrice repeat, adding thereto *Gloria Patri*. Then let the newly received brother cast himself at the feet of all, that they may pray for him, and from that day let him be counted as one of the community.

Whatever property he hath let him first bestow upon the poor, or by a solemn deed of gift make over to the monastery, keeping nothing of it all for himself, as knowing from that day forward he will have no power even over his own body. Forthwith, therefore, in the Oratory, let him be stripped of his own garments, wherewith he is clad, and be clothed in those of the monastery. And let the garments that are taken from him be laid by and kept in the wardrobe; so that if ever, by the per-

terii, projiciatur. Illam tamen petitionem, quam desuper altare Abbas tulit, non recipiat, sed in monasterio reservetur.

suasion of the devil, he consent (which God forbid !) to leave the monastery, he may be stripped of the monastic habit and cast forth. But the form of his profession, which the Abbot took from the altar, shall not be given back to him, but be kept in the monastery.

(C) The Profession.

Let him promise before all in the presence of God and His Saints—

(*a*) *Stability.*—The introduction of this vow was St. Benedict's chief reform. It corrected the abuses mentioned in Chapter I. By this vow the individual binds himself not only to a particular Rule, but also to a particular community. This is peculiar to the Benedictine system. The monk is professed for his monastery, and not merely for the Order. He is henceforth one of a family. A particular monastery is his home, and whether he is actually in the monastery or working away from it by obedience, he must ever feel that he is one of a family, and that it is by persevering until death in this obedience that he "shares in the patience of Christ, and will deserve to be a partaker in His kingdom" (Prologue).

This vow demands more of him than mere continuance in obedience; it demands, also, a persevering fidelity to the Rule, to the principles of the monastic life, and to the community spirit. "It is no small matter to live in a monastery, or in a congregation, and to converse therein without reproof, and to persevere faithful till death" ("Imitation of Christ," i. 17).

(*b*) "*Conversion of Life.*"—Every religious of whatever Order binds himself implicitly to this "conversion of life." It is contained in the very idea of the religious life which men embrace in order to aim at perfection. That we take this obligation upon us explicitly should make us very earnest in our desire for self-improvement.

Haeften says: "'Conversion' is the turning from the world to religion, from sin to repentance, from vices to virtues, from concupiscence to continence, from pride to humility, from vanity to truth, from the love of earthly things to the love of God, from the flesh to the spirit, from the exterior to the interior, from many interests to the one, from the creature to God. When a religious takes the vow of conversion, he does not bind himself actually to become perfect, but he promises to try to attain to perfection; so that it would be wrong to say that a religious who has not kept his Rule perfectly has failed in his promise to God: he can only be considered to have broken his solemn promise when, weary of effort, with full knowledge and judgment, he gives up the desire of advancing in perfection, and the attempt of living according to the Rule."

(*c*) *Obedience.*—This is the most comprehensive of the vows, and includes poverty and chastity, for these were understood to be essential to the monastic state from the beginning. The closing passage of this chapter makes this clear. As soon as anyone became a member of the community by profession, he had to give his property to the poor or to the monastery, and could "keep nothing at all for himself, as know-

ing that from that day forward he had no power even over his own body."

By the vow we promise obedience to the Rule and to Superiors; but this obligation does not bind us to obey orders which are clearly outside the scope and spirit of the Rule.

The use of obedience as a weapon of the spiritual life has been considered in Chapter V.

Prayer.

Ps. xviii. 116. "Uphold me, O Lord, according to Thy Word, and I shall live: and let me not be confounded in my expectation."

In Thee, O Lord, do I trust.

Thou wilt help me to pay to Thee the vows I have taken.

Col. iii. 3. "The world is dead to me, and I to the world, and my life is hid with Christ in God."

May I ever love to be alone with Thee!

Stabilitas! May I ever hate the world and love my cell.

The world tosses, restless as the waves of the sea.

I am Thine, Who remainest for ever!

Make me steadfast in Thy service.

Matt. x. 22. "They who persevere to the end shall be saved."

1 Cor. xv. 58. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast and unmovable; always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Apoc. ii. 10. "Be thou faithful unto death: and I will give thee the crown of life."

"*Conversio Morum.*"—May I truly seek Thee, O my God.

Turn me away from the world and from self.

A true religious is one who truly seeks Thee; who turns from evil, and fixes all his desire on Thee; who is filled with zeal for his own sanctification!

"In my heart I have disposed to ascend
Ps. lxxx. 6, 8. by steps (painfully, O God, do I climb the hill of sanctity), to go from virtue to virtue till I see Thee, the God of Gods, in Sion."

"Blessed is the man whose help is from Thee."

Obedience.—I vow my obedience to Thee, O my God.

I offer myself as a holocaust to Thee.

Nihil sibi reservans. I sacrifice to Thee my soul and my body.

Thou didst create them. They are Thine.

Accept them back from me, O my Creator.

I am Thine, dear Lord. I belong to Thee. I am Thine!

If I am faithful to my vows, I shall be able truly to say to Thee:

"O my God and my All, I love Thee with my whole heart and above all things!"

Grant that when I come to die I shall be able to cry to Thee, "My God and my All!"

Thou wilt, then, surely take me to Thyself.

CHAPTER LIX

OF THE SONS OF NOBLES OR OF POOR MEN THAT ARE OFFERED

Text.

Si quis forte de nobilibus offert filium suum Deo in monasterio, si ipse puer minori ætate est, parentes ejus faciant petitionem quam supra diximus. Et cum oblatione ipsam petitionem et manum pueri involvant in palla altaris, et sic eum offerant. De rebus autem suis aut in præsenti petitione promittant sub jurejurando, quia nunquam per se, nunquam per suspectam personam, nec quolibet modo ei aliquando aliquid dent, aut tribuant occasionem habendi.

If any nobleman shall perchance offer his son to God in the monastery, let the parents, should the boy be still in infancy, make for him the written promise as aforesaid; and, together with the oblation, let them wrap that promise and the hand of the child in the altar-cloth, and so offer him up. With respect to his property, they must in the same document promise under oath that they will never either themselves, or through anyone else, or in any way whatever, give him anything, or the means of having anything.

Vel certe, si hoc facere noluerint et aliquid offerre voluerint in eleemosynam monasterio pro mercede sua, faciant ex rebus, quas dare volunt monasterio, donationem, reservato sibi (si ita voluerint) usufructuario. Atque ita omnia obstruantur, ut nulla suspicio remaneat puero, per quam deceptus perire possit (quod absit), quod experimento didicimus. Similiter autem et pauperiores faciant. Qui vero

Or else, if they are unwilling to do this, and desire to offer something as an alms to the monastery, for their own advantage, let them make a donation of whatever they please to the monastery, reserving to themselves, if they will, the income thereof during their life. Thus let all possibility of expectation be excluded whereby the child might be deceived, and so perish (which God forbid!), as we

CENTRAL COLLECTION

ex toto nihil habent, simpliciter petitionem faciant, et cum oblatione offerant filium suum coram testibus.

have learnt by experience may happen. Let those who are poorer do in like manner. But those who have nothing whatever may simply make the promise in writing, and with the oblation, offer their son before witnesses.

Thoughts.

THIS custom of offering children as monks was founded on the absolute right over their children given to parents by the Roman Law. The available evidence would seem to show that the children were considered bound by the promises of their parents. As the parents chose a bride for their son, so did they settle the state of life he should adopt. Dom Guéranger compares these parental promises to those made by the sponsors at Baptism, the binding obligation of which upon the child no one doubts.

A law was made towards the end of the twelfth century that children offered in this way should have their free choice on reaching the years of discretion.

"They were offered with the oblation."

According to the ancient discipline, bread and wine were offered at the offertory by those for whom the Mass was said, or who were about to communicate. We have still a relic of this in the subdeacon holding the paten on which the oblation of bread was laid. It was owing to this custom that the children were offered at the offertory; and to it, no doubt, we can trace the present monastic custom of taking the vows at this time.

"With respect to property."

This passage shows that the idea of poverty was essential to the monastic state. St. Benedict is quite disinterested. All that he cares for is that the vice of "peculiarity," or personal ownership, should be excluded. "Præcipue hoc vitium peculiare radicitus amputandum est de monasterio" (Chapter XXXIII.).

CHAPTER LX

OF PRIESTS WHO MAY WISH TO DWELL IN THE MONASTERY

Text.

Si quis de ordine sacerdotum in monasterio se suscipi rogaverit, non quidem ei citius assentiatur: tamen si omnino perstiterit in hac petitione, sciat se omnem Regulæ disciplinam servaturum nec aliquid ei relaxabitur, ut sit, sicut scriptum est: "*Amice, ad quid venisti?* Concedatur ei tamen post Abbatem stare, et benedicere, aut Missam tenere; si tamen jusserit ei Abbas. Sin alias, nullatenus aliqua præsumat, sciens se disciplinæ regulari subditum, et magis humilitatis exempla omnibus det.

Si forte ordinationis aut alicujus rei causa fuerit in monasterio, illum locum attendat, quando ingressus est in monasterium, non illum, qui ei pro reverentia sacerdotli concessus est. Clericorum autem si quis eodem desiderio monasterio sociari voluerit, loco mediocri collocetur, et ipsi tamen, si

If anyone in priestly orders ask to be received into the monastery, let not consent be too quickly granted him; but if he persist in his request, let him know that he will have to observe all the discipline of the Rule, and that nothing will be relaxed in his favour, according as it is written: "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" Let him, nevertheless, be allowed to stand next the Abbot, to give the blessing, and to say Mass, if the Abbot bid him do so. Otherwise, let him presume to do nothing, knowing that he is subject to the discipline of the Rule; but rather let him give an example of humility to all.

And if there be a question of any appointment, or other business in the monastery, let him expect the position due to him according to the time of his entrance, and not that which was yielded to him out of reverence for the priesthood. If any clerics should desire in the same way to be admitted into the monastery,

promittit de observatione Regulæ, vel propria stabilitate.

let them be placed in a middle rank; but in their case, also, only on condition that they promise observance of the Rule, and stability therein.

Thoughts.

ST. BENEDICT almost fears to admit a priest into the "little flock" of Christ. He reverences the priesthood. It is a great dignity. This, he fears, may lead the priest to think he is above the Rule, that he is a shepherd, and not one of the flock. He must, therefore, be told that if he joins the community he must be subject to the discipline of the Rule in all things, that he must set an example of humility to the rest, and not presume to exercise his priestly office without permission.

St. Benedict seems to say to the priest: "Remember what you came for. You have a great dignity, you share in the office of Christ; you must therefore be like to Christ in your character, and practise those virtues which He cherished so highly, humility and obedience. Why did you come to the cloister, if not to practise these and such-like virtues, which you could not practise perfectly in the world?"

The obligations of humility and obedience to the Rule, so far from being lessened for those who are priests, are increased by their close union with Christ, the great High Priest.

Prayer.

Thou hast granted me an entrance into the religious life.

Thou hast made me Thy priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech.

How great is Thy goodness! How bountiful is Thy love!

How holy ought my life to be!

Why have I become a religious?

"Amice, ad quid venisti?"

Dear Lord, to sanctify myself! to become more worthy of my office!

What an example of all virtue my life should be!

A priest, a religious!

"Bonitatem et disciplinam et scientiam doce me, Domine."

I must give an example of humility to all.

I must yield exact obedience to the Rule.

Why have I come to the monastery?

To seek the perfection of virtue.

Give me a deep reverence for my priesthood.

My obligations of perfection ever increase.

May I shrink from relaxations.

May I ever strive to live the perfect life.

May I adorn my soul with all virtue.

CHAPTER LXI

OF STRANGER MONKS: HOW THEY ARE TO BE RECEIVED

Text.

Si quis monachus peregrinus de longinquis provinciis supervenerit, si pro hospite voluerit habitare in monasterio, et contentus fuerit consuetudine loci quam invenerit, et non forte superfluitate sua perturbat Monasterium, sed simpliciter contentus est quod invenerit, suscipiatur quanto tempore cupit. Si quæ tamen rationabiliter et cum humilitate caritatis reprehendit aut ostendit, tractet Abbas prudenter, ne forte eum propter hoc ipsum Dominus direxerit. Si vero postea voluerit stabilitatem suam firmare, non renuatur talis voluntas, et maxime, quia tempore hospitalitatis potuit ejus vita dignosci.

Quod si superfluus, aut vitiosus inventus fuerit tempore hospitalitatis, non solum non debet sociari corpori monasterii, verum etiam dicatur ei honeste ut discedat, ne ejus miseria etiam alii vitientur. Quod si non fuerit talis qui mereatur projici, non solum si petierit suscipiatur

If any monk who is a stranger come from distant parts, and desire to dwell in the monastery as a guest, and if he be content with the customs which he there findeth, and do not trouble the monastery by any superfluous wants, but be satisfied with what he findeth, let him be received for as long a time as he will. And if reasonably and with humility he reprove and point out what is amiss, let the Abbot prudently mark his words, in case God perchance hath sent him for this very end. If afterwards he desire to bind himself to remain there, let not his wish be denied him, especially since during the time he was a guest his manner of life could well be ascertained.

But if during that time he was found burdensome or prone to vice, not only must he not be admitted amongst the brethren, but he must even be courteously bidden to depart, lest others should be corrupted by his evil living. If, however, he is not such as to deserve to be sent

congregationi sociandus, verum etiam suadeatur ut stet, ut ejus exemplo alii erudiantur, et quia in omni loco uni Domino servitur, et uni Regi militatur.

away, let him not merely on his own asking be received and admitted into the community, but even be persuaded to remain, that the others may be taught by his example; because in every place we serve one God and fight under one King.

Quem etiam si talem esse perspexerit Abbas, liceat eum in superiore aliquantulum constituere loco. Non solum autem monachum, sed etiam de supradictis gradibus sacerdotum vel clericorum, stabilire potest Abbas in majori, quam ingreditur loco, si ejus talem prospexerit esse vitam. Caveat autem Abbas, ne aliquando de alio noto monasterio monachum ad habitandum suscipiat, sine consensu Abbatis ejus, aut litteris commendatitiis; quia scriptum est: "*Quod tibi non vis fieri, alteri ne feceris.*"

And if the Abbot perceive him to be a man of this kind, he may put him in a somewhat higher place. It shall be in the Abbot's power to assign not only to a simple monk, but also to any of the aforesaid priests or clerics, a higher place than that due to them by their entrance into the monastery, if he see that their lives are such as to deserve it. But let the Abbot take care never to receive a monk from any known monastery without his own Abbot's consent and letters of recommendation; as it is written: "What thou wilt not have done to thyself, do not thou to another."

Thoughts.

BEFORE St. Benedict's time, monks used to go from one monastery to another, some with a desire of greater strictness of life, or for the guidance of some master of the spiritual life, others from a restless love of change. The former may do good to the monastery. St. Benedict, with his vivid faith, sees that God may have sent them for the good of the community. Their advice and criticisms are to be listened to by the Abbot. The latter are to be "courteously bidden to depart, lest others be corrupted by their evil living."

We notice, also, that St. Benedict is too broad-minded to harbour jealousy or envy of others.

All religious "serve one God and fight under one King." The success of one Order or House must ever be regarded as the success of our own. The good work done by religious of other Orders must cause us joy because the interests of our Divine Master are being furthered.

CHAPTER LXII

OF THE PRIESTS OF THE MONASTERY

Text.

Si quis Abbas sibi presbyterum, vel diaconum ordinare petierit, de suis eligat qui dignus sit sacerdotio fungi. Ordinatus autem caveat elationem aut superbiam; nec quicquam præsumat, nisi quod ei ab Abbate præcipitur, sciens se multo magis disciplinæ regulari subditum. Nec occasione sacerdotii obliviscatur Regulæ obedientiam et disciplinam, sed magis ac magis in Domino proficiat.

If any Abbot desire to have a priest or deacon ordained for his monastery, let him choose from among his monks one who is worthy to fulfil the priestly office. And let him that is ordained beware of arrogance and pride, and presume to do nothing that is not commanded him by the Abbot, knowing that he is now all the more subject to regular discipline. Let him not, by reason of his priesthood, become forgetful of the obedience and discipline of the Rule, but advance ever more and more in godliness.

Locum vero illum semper attendat, quo ingressus est in Monasterio, præter officium altaris, et si forte electio congregationis et voluntas Abbatis pro vitæ merito eum promovere voluerit: qui tamen regulam a Decanis, vel Præpositis constitutam sibi servandam sciat; quod si aliter præsumpserit, non ut sacerdos, sed ut rebellis judicetur. Et sæpe admonitus si non correxerit, etiam Episcopus adhibeatur in testimonium. Quod si nec sic emendaverit, clares-

Let him always keep the place due to him according to his entrance into the monastery, except with regard to his office at the altar, or unless the choice of the community and the will of the Abbot should raise him to a higher place for the merit of his life. Nevertheless, let him know that he must observe the rules prescribed by the deans or provosts. Should he presume to do otherwise, he shall be judged, not as a priest, but as a rebel; but if, after frequent warning,

centibus culpis, projiciatur de monasterio; si tamen talis fuerit ejus contumacia, ut subdi aut obedire Regulæ nolit.

he do not amend himself, let recourse be had to the intervention of the Bishop. If even then he will not amend, and his guilt is clearly shown, let him be cast forth from the monastery, provided his contumacy be such that he will not submit nor obey the Rule.

Thoughts.

THERE are excellent maxims given to priests in this chapter. The words of our Holy Father should be ever in their ears, urging them on to greater perfection.

1. "Let the Abbot choose from among his monks one who is *worthy* to fulfil the priestly office."

As an additional spur to their energy in the spiritual life, they should remind themselves of the qualities required in a priest.

2. "Let him that is ordained beware of arrogance and pride."

3. "He is now all the more subject to regular discipline."

4. "Let him not, by reason of his priesthood, become forgetful of the obedience and discipline of the Rule."

5. "Let him advance ever more and more in godliness."

6. "Let him know that he must observe the rules prescribed by the deans or provosts."

Prayer.

Qui dignus sit sacerdotio fungi.

"Domine non sum dignus."

Yet, O my God, Thou hast chosen me as Thy priest!

How great is the dignity Thou hast conferred on Thy priests!

"They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people" (1 Pet. ii. 9).

"Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins" Heb. v. 1.

They are the "dispensers of the mysteries of God"!

"The light of the world, the salt of the earth" Matt. v. 13, 14.

"The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth, because he is the angel of the Lord of Hosts" Mal. ii. 7.

O ineffable power! O tremendous mystery!

My God, help me! raise me above the earth!

Make me more worthy of this angelic office.

With what deep humility should I be filled!

May I ever fear elation and pride.

My priesthood should strengthen my efforts at perfection.

It should make me advance "more and more in godliness."

May I never become forgetful of the observance and discipline of the Rule.

The greater my dignity, the greater is the obligation of personal holiness.

Lord, I am not worthy! Help me, dear Lord!

CHAPTER LXIII

OF THE ORDER OF THE COMMUNITY

Text.

Ordines suos in monasterio ita conservent, ut conversionis tempus et vitæ meritum discernit, vel ut Abbas constituerit. Qui Abbas non conturbet gregem sibi commissum, nec quasi libera utens potestate, injuste disponat aliquid: sed cogitet semper, quia de omnibus judiciis et operibus suis redditurus est Deo rationem. Ergo secundum ordines quos constituerit, vel quos habuerint ipsi fratres, sic accedant ad pacem, ad Communionem, ad Psalmum imponendum, in choro standum. Et in omnibus omnino locis ætas non discernatur in ordine, nec præjudicet; quia Samuel et Daniel pueri Presbyteros judicaverunt.

Let everyone keep that place in the monastery which the time of his entering religion, the merit of his life, or the appointment of the Abbot, shall determine. And let not the Abbot disquiet the flock committed to him, nor by an undue use of his authority ordain anything unjustly; but let him ever bear in mind that he will have to give an account to God of all his judgments and all his deeds. Therefore, in that order which they hold, or which he shall have appointed, let the brethren receive the kiss of peace, approach to Communion, intone the Psalms, and stand in choir. And in no place whatsoever let age decide the order, or be prejudicial to it; for Samuel and Daniel, when but children, judged the elders.

Ergo exceptis iis, quos (ut diximus) altiori consilio Abbas prætulerit, vel degradaverit certis ex causis, reliqui omnes, ut convertuntur, ita sint, ut, verbi gratia, qui secunda diei hora venerit in monasterium, juniorem se noverit esse illo qui

Excepting, therefore, those whom (as we have said) the Abbot hath promoted with some special object, or for distinct reasons hath degraded, let all the rest stand in the order of their coming to religion; so that, for example, he who entered the

prima hora diei venit, cujuslibet ætatis aut dignitatis sit. Pueris vero per omnia ab omnibus disciplina teneatur.

Juniores ergo priores suos honorent; priores vero juniores diligant. In ipsa autem appellatione nominum nulli liceat alium puro nomine appellare; sed priores juniores suos fratres nominent, juniores autem priores suos nonnos vocent, quod intelligitur paterna reverentia. Abbas autem, quia vices Christi agere videtur, Domnus et Abbas vocetur: non sua assumptione, sed honore et amore Christi. Ipse autem cogitet, et sic se exhibeat ut dignus sit tali honore.

Ubicumque autem sibi obviant fratres, junior a priore benediotionem petat. Transeunte majore, minor surgat et det ei locum sedendi. Nec præsumat junior consedere, nisi ei præcipiat senior suus: ut fiat quod scriptum est: "*Honore invicem prævenientes.*" Pueri parvuli, vel adolescentes, in Oratorio vel ad mensam, cum disciplina ordines suos consequantur. Foris autem vel ubiubi, custodiam habeant et disciplinam, usque dum ad intelligibilem ætatem perveniant.

monastery at the second hour of the day must know that he is lower than he who came at the first hour, whatever may be his age or dignity. The children are to be kept under discipline at all times and by everyone.

Let the younger brethren, then, reverence their elders, and the elder love the younger. In calling each other by name, let none address another by his simple name; but let the elders call the younger brethren *Brothers*, and the younger call their elders *Fathers*, by which is implied the reverence due to a father. But let the Abbot, since he is considered to represent the person of Christ, be called Domnus and Abbot, not that he hath taken it upon himself, but out of reverence and love for Christ. Let him be mindful of this, and show himself to be worthy of such an honour.

Wherever the brethren meet one another, let the younger ask a blessing from the elder. And when the elder passeth by, let the younger rise, and give place to him to sit down; nor let the younger presume to sit with him, unless the elder bid him, that it may come to pass as it is written, "In honour preferring one another." Let the young children and boys take their places in the Oratory, or at table, with all due discipline. In other places also, wherever they may be, let them be under proper care and discipline, until they come to the age of understanding.

Thoughts.

THOUGH we are "all one in Christ," yet even in a religious society there must be grades and distinctions. St. Benedict gives three reasons for precedence: (1) Priority of entrance; (2) superiority of merit; (3) appointment by the Abbot — *e.g.*, officials. It is by the first that precedence is ordinarily regulated. The date of conversion to God's service, which is a new birth, gives to each his place and position in the monastic family.

"Let the younger brethren, then, reverence their elders, and the elder love the younger." The Rules which follow are both the expression and the safeguard of monastic courtesy. The terms "Father" and "Brother" embody the principles of reverence and of charity. In the same way, the titles "Domnus" and "Abbot" are to recall to us the reverence and love due to Christ, Whom the Superior represents. These and other marks of respect mentioned in the text are something more than mere forms of politeness: they are a supernatural respect for one another, which is part of the Christian as well as of the monastic spirit. They are based upon Sacred Scripture—"in honour preferring one another." Benedictine monasteries have ever had a reputation for courtesy and refinement. These qualities have become traditional in the Order, and are taught not only in this chapter, but in several other places in the Rule. Compare the last five degrees of humility, and the "Instruments of Good Works" grouped under the heading "Courtesy" in Chapter IV.

When we neglect to observe these Rules, we endanger that reverence for Superiors and humble love for one another which these laws teach and safeguard.

Prayer.

Dominus et Abbas. Jesus! Thou art my Lord and my Father!

I honour and I love Thee.

Honore Christi. When I honour my Superior, I honour Thee.

He is "considered to hold Thy place."

Benedictionem petat. Gladly should I beg Thy blessing.

Minor surgat. Readily should I show all honour to Thee.

May I, then, ever "in honour prefer another," for then, dear Lord, I do honour to Thee.

Amore Christi. May I also love my brethren for Thy sake.

The spiritual man recognizes Christ in the brethren.

1 Tim. i. 5. "The end of Thy commandment is charity from a pure heart."

I love Thee, dear Lord, for Thy own sake.

I love my brethren also for Thy sake.

1 John iv. 16. "God is charity, and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him."

May I ever see Thee in my Superiors and brethren.

This will give me a reverential spirit.

It will teach me *true* charity.

It will make me humble and obedient.

Col. iii. 11-14. "Christ *is all*, and is *in all*.

"Put ye on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience:

"Bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against another: even as the Lord has forgiven you, so do you also.

"But above all these things have charity, which is the bond of perfection."

CHAPTER LXIV

OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE ABBOT

Text.

In Abbatis ordinatione illa semper consideretur ratio, ut hic constituatur, quem sibi omnis concors congregatio, secundum timorem Dei, sive etiam pars quamvis parva congregationis, saniori consilio elegerit. Vitæ autem merito, et sapientiæ doctrina eligatur, qui ordinandus est, etiam si ultimus fuerit in ordine congregationis. Quod si etiam omnis congregatio vitiis suis (quod quidem absit) consentiens personam pari consilio elegerit, et vitia ipsa aliquatenus in notitiam Episcopi (ad cujus Diœcesim pertinet locus ipse) vel Abbatibus, aut Christianis vicinis claruerint, prohibeant pravorum prævalere consensum, et domui Dei dignum constituant dispensatorem; scientes, pro hoc se recepturos mercedem bonam, si illud caste et zelo Dei faciant, sicut e contrario peccatum, si negligant.

In the appointing of an Abbot, let this principle always be observed: that he be made Abbot whom all the brethren with one consent in the fear of God, or even a small part of the community with more wholesome counsel, shall elect. Let him who is to be appointed be chosen for the merit of his life and the wisdom of his doctrine, even though he should be the last in order in the community. But if all the brethren with one accord (which God forbid!) should elect a man willing to acquiesce in their evil habits, and these in some way come to the knowledge of the Bishop to whose diocese that place belongs, or of the Abbots or neighbouring Christians, let them not suffer the consent of these wicked men to prevail, but appoint a worthy steward over the house of God, knowing that for this they shall receive a good reward, if they do it with a pure intention and for the love of God, as, on the other hand, they will sin if they neglect it.

Ordinatus autem Abbas cogitet semper quale onus suscepit, et cui redditurus est rationem villicationis suæ; sciatque sibi oportere prodesse magis, quam præesse. Oportet ergo eum esse doctum in lege divina, ut sciat unde proferat nova et vetera: castum, sobrium, misericordem; et semper superexaltet misericordiam judicio, ut idem ipse consequatur. Oderit vitia, diligat fratres.

Let him that hath been appointed Abbot always bear in mind what a burden he hath received, and to Whom he will have to give an account of his stewardship; and let him know that it beseemeth him more to profit his brethren than to preside over them. He must, therefore, be learned in the law of God, that he may know whence to bring forth new things and old; he must be chaste, sober, merciful, ever preferring mercy to justice, that he himself may obtain mercy. Let him hate sin and love the brethren.

In ipsa autem correctione prudenter agat, et ne quid nimis; ne dum nimis eradere cupit æruginem, frangatur vas; suamque fragilitatem semper suspectus sit, memineritque calamum quassatum non conterendum. In quibus non dicimus, ut permittat nutriri vitia, sed prudenter et cum caritate ea amputet, prout viderit cuique expedire, sicut jam diximus; et studeat plus amari, quam timeri. Non sit turbulentus et anxius, non sit nimius et obstinatus, non zelotypus et nimis suspiciosus, quia nunquam requiescet.

And even in his corrections, let him act with prudence, and not go too far, lest, while he seeketh too eagerly to scrape off the rust, the vessel be broken. Let him keep his own frailty ever before his eyes, and remember that the bruised reed must not be broken. And by this we do not mean that he should suffer vices to grow up, but that prudently and with charity he should cut them off, in the way he shall see best for each, as we have already said; and let him study rather to be loved than feared. Let him not be violent nor over-anxious, not exacting nor obstinate, not jealous nor prone to suspicion, or else he will never be at rest.

In ipsis imperiis suis sit providus et consideratus, sive secundum Deum, sive secundum seculum sint. Opera quæ injungit, discernat ac temperet, cogitans discretionem sancti Jacob, dicentis: "*Si greges meos plus in ambulando fecero laborare, morientur cuncti una die.*" Hæc ergo aliaque testimonia discretionis matris virtutis sumens, sic omnia temperet, ut sit quod et fortes cupiant, et infirmi non

In all his commands, whether concerning spiritual or temporal matters, let him be prudent and considerate. In the works which he imposeth, let him be discreet and moderate, bearing in mind the discretion of holy Jacob when he said: "If I cause my flocks to be overdriven, they will all perish in one day." Taking, then, the testimonies borne by these and the like words to discretion, the mother of virtue, let

refugiant. Et præcipue, ut præsentem Regulam in omnibus conservet; ut, dum bene ministraverit, audiat a Domino, quod servus bonus, qui erogavit triticum conservis suis in tempore suo: "*Amen dico vobis*, ait, *super omnia bona sua constituet eum.*"

him so temper all things tha the strong may have something to strive after, and the weal nothing at which to take alarm And especially let him observe this present Rule in all things so that, having faithfully fulfilled his stewardship, he may hear from the Lord what tha good servant heard who gave wheat to his fellow-servants in due season: "Amen, I say unto you, over all his goods shall he place him."

Thoughts.

THIS chapter is one of the most remarkable in the Rule. It breathes that spirit of discretion for which St. Gregory commends the Rule so highly. Its short and pregnant maxims have been the guide of rulers in every sphere. From its position in the Rule, and from its points of contrast with Chapter II., it is probable that St. Benedict wrote it after the rest, when he was mature in experience. The electors must remember that the Abbot is to be chosen for "the merit of his life and the wisdom of his doctrine." Then follow these most wise maxims:

1. Let him that hath been appointed Abbot always bear in mind what a burden he hath received, and to Whom he will have to give an account of his stewardship.

2. Let him know that it beseemeth him more to profit his brethren than to preside over them—"magis prodesse quam præesse."

3. He must be learned in the Law of God, that he may know whence to bring forth new things and old.

4. He must be chaste, sober, and merciful, ever

preferring mercy to justice, that he himself may obtain mercy.

5. Let him hate sin and love the brethren.

6. Even in his corrections, let him act with prudence, and not go too far, lest, while he seeketh too eagerly to scrape off the rust, the vessel be broken.

7. Let him keep his own frailty ever before his eyes, and remember that the bruised reed must no be broken.

8. We do not mean that he should suffer vices to grow up, but that with prudence and charity he should cut them off in the way he should see best for each.

9. Let him study rather to be loved than feared.

10. Let him not be violent nor over-anxious, nor exacting, nor obstinate, not jealous nor prone to suspicion, or he will never be at rest.

11. In all his commands, whether spiritual or temporal, let him be prudent and considerate.

12. In the works which he imposeth, let him be discreet and moderate, bearing in mind the discretion of holy Jacob when he said: "If I cause my flocks to be overdriven, they will all perish in one day."

13. Taking, then, such testimonies as are borne by these and the like words to discretion, the mother of virtues, let him so temper all things that the strong may have somewhat to strive after, and the weak nothing at which to take alarm.

The Superior, then, is the servant of the brethren. He holds his office to labour for them and to benefit them, and not for his own honour. He is in Christ's place, Who said, "I am in the midst of you as one

[illegible]

[illegible] of my [illegible]

[illegible]

I am not holy and I am not wise.

What a burden Thou hast put upon me!

To Thee shall I have to render an account.

[illegible] Lord help me!

I am the servant of Thy servants, O Lord.

I must be in the midst of them as one that serveth.

May I give my life for my sheep!

May I ever love them and try to benefit them.

Oderit vitia diligat fratres. When I correct, may love reign in my heart.

Ne quid nimis. Give me prudence and moderation.

Suam fragilitatem. May I remember my own frailty and sinfulness.

May my position humble me!

Plus amari quam timeri. Charity must reign in my heart.

Zelotypus, suspiciosus. Save me from bitterness, from jealousy, from unrest.

Providus, consideratus. Make me prudent and considerate.

Discretio. May I discreetly temper all things!

May I stimulate the strong of soul to seek Thee.

May I support the weak in their journey to Thee.

I will try, O my Master, to keep this Rule in all things.

Make me faithful in my stewardship!

Make me a "good servant" to Thee and Thine.

Amen.

THE VIEW A SUPERIOR SHOULD TAKE OF HIS OFFICE.

"To one who is well founded in humility nothing can be more humbling than the exercise of authority. It discovers to him his weaknesses and limitations, and reveals his defects and shortcomings. This is especially the case when spiritual authority is concerned, because he has to deal with the eternal

interests, and the responsibility is tremendous. The light he seeks for others may turn to his own rebuke, and the simple and perfect who are under his care teach him many a silent lesson, while his froward and difficult subjects give him many a humiliation. The burden of responsibility makes him sensible of infirmity, and his failures reveal to him his deficiencies and the great need he has of help from God. Undeserved praise strikes his soul with reproach. He will feel the need of humbling exercises, but these must be in secret, because he ought not so to lower himself externally as to injure his authority with the proud, dull-hearted, and weak; but, whilst loved, feared, and reverenced as the superior and servant of all, in his silent spirit, as St. Augustine says, he must be at the feet of all" (Ullathorne, "The Groundwork of Christian Virtues," p. 151).

CHAPTER LXV

OF THE PROVOST OF THE MONASTERY

Text.

Sæpius quidem contingit, ut per ordinationem Præpositi scandala gravia in monasteriis oriantur, dum sint aliqui maligno spiritu superbiæ inflati, qui æstimantes se secundos Abbates esse, assumentes sibi tyrannidem, scandala nutriunt, dissensiones in congregatione faciunt, et maxime in illis locis, ubi ab eodem sacerdote, vel ab eisdem Abbatibus qui Abbatem ordinant, ab ipsis etiam et Præpositus ordinatur. Quod quam sit absurdum facile advertitur, quia ab ipso initio ordinationis materia ei datur superbiendi, dum ei suggeritur a cogitationibus suis, exutum eum esse a potestate Abbatis sui, quia ab ipsis est ordinatus, a quibus et Abbas.

Hinc suscitantur invidiæ, rixæ, detractiones, æmulationes, dissensiones, exordinationes; et dum contraria sibi invicem Abbas Præpositusque sentiunt, et ipsorum necesse est sub hac dissensione animas periclitari; et hi qui sub ipsis sunt, dum

It happeneth very often that by the appointment of the Provost grave scandals arise in monasteries; since there are some who, puffed up by the evil spirit of pride, and deeming themselves to be second Abbots, take upon themselves to tyrannize over others, and so foster scandals and cause dissensions in the community; especially in those places where the Provost is appointed by the same Bishop, or the same Abbots as appoint the Abbot himself. How foolish this custom is may easily be seen; for from his first entering upon office an incentive to pride is given to him, the thought suggesting itself that he is freed from the authority of the Abbot, since he hath been appointed by the very same persons.

Hence are stirred up envy, quarrels, backbiting, dissensions, jealousy, and disorders. And while the Abbot and Provost are at variance with one another, it must needs be that souls are endangered by reason of their disagreement; and those who

adulantur partibus, eunt in perditionem. Cujus periculi malum illos respicit in capite, qui talibus in ordinatione se fecerunt auctores. Ideoque nos prævidemus expedire propter pacis caritatisque custodiam, in Abbatis pendere arbitrio ordinationem monasterii sui. Et si potest fieri, per Decanos ordinetur (ut antea disposuimus) omnis utilitas monasterii, prout Abbas disposuerit: ut dum pluribus committitur, unus non superbiat.

are their subjects, while favouring one side or the other, run to destruction. The evil of this peril falleth on the heads of those who by their action have been the cause of such disorders. We foresee, therefore, that it is expedient, for the preservation of peace and charity, that the ordering of the monastery depend upon the will of the Abbot. If possible, let all the affairs of the monastery be attended to (as we have already arranged) by Deans as the Abbot shall appoint; so that, the same office being shared by many, no one may become proud.

Quod si aut locus expetit, aut congregatio petierit rationabiliter cum humilitate, et Abbas judicaverit expedire, quemcumque elegerit Abbas, cum consilio fratrum timentium Deum, ordinet ipse sibi Præpositum.

But if the needs of the place require it, and the community ask for it reasonably and with humility, and the Abbot judge it expedient, let him himself appoint a Provost, whomsoever he shall choose with the counsel of brethren who fear God.

Qui tamen Præpositus illa agat cum reverentia quæ ab Abbate suo ei injuncta fuerint, nihil contra Abbatis voluntatem, aut ordinationem, faciens: quia quantum prælatus est cæteris, tantum eum oportet sollicite observare præcepta Regulæ.

Let the Provost reverently do whatever is enjoined him by his Abbot, and nothing against his will or command; for the more he is raised above the rest, so much the more carefully ought he to observe the precepts of the Rule.

Qui Præpositus, si repertus fuerit vitiosus, aut elatione deceptus superbiæ, aut contemptor sanctæ Regulæ fuerit comprobatus, admoneatur verbis usque quater: si non emendaverit, adhibeatur ei correctio disciplinæ regularis. Quod si neque sic correxerit, tunc dejiciatur de ordine Præposituræ, et alius, qui dignus est, in loco ejus subrogetur. Quod si et postea in congregatione quietus et obediens non fuerit, etiam de monasterio expellatur. Cogitet tamen Abbas, se de omnibus

And if the Provost be found culpable or deceived by the haughtiness of pride, or be proved a contemner of the Holy Rule, let him be admonished by words until the fourth time, and then let the correction of regular discipline be applied to him. But if even then he do not amend, let him be deposed from the office of Provost, and another, who is worthier, be substituted in his place. If afterwards he be not quiet and obedient in the community, let him be expelled from the monastery

judiciis Deo redditurum rationem, ne forte invidiæ aut zeli flamma urat animam.

Nevertheless, let the Abbot bear in mind that he must give an account to God of all his judgments, lest perchance the flame of envy or jealousy be kindled in his soul.

Thoughts.

In the last chapter St. Benedict urged upon the Superior the duties of moderation and gentleness. In this chapter, however, he tells him that he must *govern*, and that no official must be allowed to arrogate power to himself. To prevent such a calamity happening to a monastery, the Prior must be appointed by the Abbot, and too much power must not be given to him.

In this chapter we can see how anxious St. Benedict is for the humility and obedience of the monks. The "ordering of the monastery is to depend upon the will of the Abbot"; the work of the monastery must be "shared by many." Why is this? "So that no one may become proud."

The Prior especially must set an example of humble obedience. He must do "with reverence" whatever is enjoined by the Abbot, and nothing against his will or command. Let him remember that "the more he is raised above the rest, the more carefully ought he to observe the Rule."

If he does not show an example of these virtues, if he is "proud and a contemner of the Rule," he must be corrected; if after four corrections he does not amend, he must be deposed; if he does not then remain quiet and obedient, he must be expelled from the monastery.

Prayer.

I have vowed obedience to Thee, O my God, once and for all.

This virtue is to sanctify me by humbling me.

Materia superbiendi. Destroy in me all incentive to pride.

Quantum prælatus cæteris. The greater my responsibilities, the greater must be my humility.

Cum reverentia quæ ab Abbate suo. I must submit to Thee, and most reverently listen to him who holds Thy place.

Through his lips Thy orders come.

I believe, O my God, and I submit.

Order all things according to Thy will.

Save me from the pride of an independent spirit.

Nihil contra Abbatis voluntatem. May I never do anything against the will and command of the Abbot.

Sollicite observare præcepta Regulæ. Most carefully must I observe the precepts of the Holy Rule.

Help me to teach humility of heart by my example.

Save Thy children from all disorders and quarrels.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like to Thy heart.

CHAPTER LXVI

OF THE PORTER OF THE MONASTERY

Text.

Ad portam monasterii ponatur senex sapiens, qui sciat accipere responsum et reddere; cujus maturitas eum non sinat vagari. Qui portarius cellam debet habere juxta portam, ut venientes semper præsentem inveniant, a quo responsum accipiant. Et mox ut aliquis pulsaverit aut pauper clamaverit, "*Deo gratias*" respondeat, aut benedicat; et cum omni mansuetudine timoris Dei reddat responsum festinanter, cum fervore caritatis. Qui portarius, si indiget solatio, juniorem fratrem accipiat.

Monasterium autem (si fieri potest) ita debet construi, ut omnia necessaria, id est, aqua, molendinum, hortus, vel artes diversæ intra monasterium exerceantur, ut non sit necessitas monachis vagandi foras; quia omnino non expedit animabus eorum. Hanc autem Regulam sæpius volumus in congregatione legi, ne quis fratrum de ignorantia se excuset.

At the gate of the monastery let there be placed a wise old man, who knoweth how to give and to receive an answer, and whose ripeness of years suffereth him not to wander about. He ought to have his cell near the gate, so that they who come may always find someone at hand to give them an answer. As soon as anyone shall knock, or a poor man shall call to him, let him answer, "Thanks be to God," or bid God bless him, and then, with all mildness and fear of God, let him give reply without delay in the fervour of charity. If the porter need help, let him have with him one of the younger brethren.

The monastery, however, ought, if possible, to be so constituted that all things necessary, such as water, a mill, and a garden, and the various crafts, may be contained within it; so that there may be no need for the monks to go abroad, for this is by no means expedient for their souls. And we wish this Rule to be frequently read in the community, that none of the brethren may excuse himself on the plea of ignorance.

Thoughts.

WE have an example in this chapter of St. Benedict's charity and courtesy to all. An opportunity of showing charity to anyone, especially if poor, must be a cause of thankfulness, for in them Christ is served. Therefore serve them with "Deo gratias" upon your lips. The favour is done by the guest, not by the monastery.

How careful St. Benedict is of the spirituality of his monks! Before any of them may come in contact with the world, they must be wise, mature, and prudent in speech. He wishes the monastery to be the only world in which they are interested.

Though active works may, in these days, take them from the monastery, yet the principle here given is ever necessary. The monks must love the retreat of their monastery. Exterior work must not be allowed to dissipate them, or it will be "by no means expedient for their souls." Their chief interest and love must be centred in their monastic life.

"We wish this Rule to be frequently read in the community, that none may excuse himself on the plea of ignorance."

Guéranger and others think the Rule originally ended here, and that these words refer to the whole Rule, and not to this chapter only.

Prayer.

Cum fervore caritatis. Fill me, O Lord, with fervent charity for all men.

To serve them is to serve Thee.

Deo gratias! How grateful must I be for any opportunity of charity!

Give me a love of retirement and solitude.

Withdraw me from the world and its interests.

Ps. iv. 3. "Why do ye love vanity and seek after lying, O my soul?"

How unhappy I have been when I loved creatures!

"Turn, O my soul, unto thy rest, for the Lord has been bountiful to thee" (Ps. cxiv. 7).

Thou hast given riches to my soul.

Keep me in Thy charity.

1 John ii. 15. "If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him."

1 John ii. 15. "Serve not the world, nor those things which are in the world."

"To go abroad is by no means expedient for my soul."

Love, then, the cloister, its precious silence, the quiet prayer to thy God.

Ut non sit necessitas Monachis vagandi foras. Make thyself an alien to the world.

Find all that is necessary for thee in thy monastic life.

CHAPTER LXVII

OF THE BRETHREN WHO ARE SENT ON A JOURNEY

Text.

Dirigendi fratres in via, omnium fratrum, vel Abbatis orationi se commendent: et semper ad orationem ultimam operis Dei commemoratio omnium absentium fiat. Revertentes autem de via fratres, ipso die quo redeunt, per omnes canonicas horas, dum expletur opus Dei, prostrati solo Oratorii ab omnibus petant orationem propter excessus, ne quid forte subripuerit in via visus, aut auditus malæ rei, aut otiosi sermonis. Nec præsumat quisquam alio referre quæcumque foris monasterium viderit aut audierit, quia plurima destructio est. Quod si quis præsumpserit, vindictæ regulari subjaceat. Similiter, et qui præsumpserit claustra monasterii egredi vel quocumque ire, vel quidpiam quamvis parvum sine Abbatis jussione facere.

Let the brethren who are about to be sent on a journey commend themselves to the prayers of all the brethren and of the Abbot, and at the last prayer of the work of God let a commemoration be always made of the absent. Let the brethren that return from a journey, on the very day that they come back, lie prostrate on the floor of the Oratory at all the canonical hours, while the work of God is being performed, and beg the prayers of all on account of their transgressions, in case they should perchance upon the way have seen or heard anything harmful, or fallen into idle talk. And let no one presume to relate to another what he may have seen or heard outside the monastery; for thence arise manifold evils. If anyone shall so presume, let him be subjected to the punishment prescribed by the Rule. And he shall undergo a like penalty who dareth to leave the enclosure of the monastery, or to go anywhere, or do anything, however trifling, without permission of the Abbot

Thoughts.

IN this chapter we have the same lesson taught as in the preceding chapter—that for religious men the world is dangerous. The mind is easily dissipated, and the spirit of prayer and mortification is easily lost. Therefore, the brethren in the security of the monastery must pray for those whose duty it is to work in the world. Those who return to the monastery from the world must not, by narrating what they have seen and heard, arouse the curiosity and distract the minds of the religious.

(For prayer, see the preceding chapter.)

CHAPTER LXVIII

IF A BROTHER BE COMMANDED TO DO IMPOSSIBILITIES

Text.

Si cui fratri aliqua forte gravia aut impossibilia injunguntur, suscipiat quidem jubentis imperium cum omni mansuetudine et obedientia. Quod si omnino virium suarum viderit pondus excedere, impossibilitatis suæ causas ei qui sibi præest patienter et opportune suggerat, non superbiendo, aut resistendo, vel contradicendo. Quod si post suggestionem suam in sua sententia Prioris imperium perduraverit, sciat junior ita sibi expedire, et ex caritate confidens de adjutorio Dei, obediat.

If on any brother there be laid commands that are hard and impossible, let him receive the orders of him who biddeth him with all mildness and obedience. But if he seeth the weight of the burden altogether to exceed his strength, let him seasonably and with patience lay before his Superior the reasons of his incapacity to obey, without showing pride, resistance, or contradiction. If, however, after this the Superior still persist in his command, let the younger know that it is expedient for him ; and let him obey for the love of God, trusting in His assistance.

Thoughts.

THIS chapter was probably added to the original Rule to solve questions which arose as to the *extent* of the obedience required by the Rule. It urges the brethren to that courageous and heroic obedience we read of in the lives of the Fathers of the Desert.

"They are quick to fulfil, without any discussion, all those things that are ordered by the Superior, as if they were commanded by God from heaven; so that sometimes when impossibilities are commanded them, they undertake these with such faith and devotion as to strive with all their powers, and without the slightest hesitation, to fulfil them and carry them out; and out of reverence for their Senior they do not even consider whether a command is an impossibility" ("Institutes of Cassian," iv. 10). However difficult and seemingly impossible a command may be, it should be received with "all mildness and obedience." The subject should *begin* to fulfil the command, for the preliminary stages are not impossible. If time shows that the burden is too great, then seasonable and patient representation to the Superior is not against obedience. If this representation is made with pride and resistance, it is clear that the spirit of humble and ready submission is wanting to the monk; he has set bounds to his obedience, and has drawn back from the holocaust he offered at profession. When the opinions of the Superior and the subject are opposed, the subject must submit "for the love of God," and loyally try to carry out the commands imposed on him, trusting in the assistance of God.

Prayer.

Who is it that layeth commands upon me?

Jubentis imperium. I believe, O my God, that they come from Thee.

Cum mansuetudine et obedientia.

Shall I not receive them with meekness and obedience?

Thou triest me and purifiest me.

If I accept trials which come from Thee, they will teach me perfect patience, a more profound humility, and a more complete renunciation.

Shall I not, then, welcome them, however hard?

Why am I so afraid and cowardly?

Confidens in adjutorio Dei.

Why do I not trust in Thy help, O my God?

When I feel overburdened, why do I not turn to Thee?

Teach me, O Lord, to trust more in Thee; to come to Thee when heavily burdened, that I may be refreshed.

Superbiendo aut resistendo.

Save me from the spirit of pride and resistance.

Heb. xii. 11.

"Now all chastisement for the present indeed seemeth not to bring with it joy, but sorrow: but afterwards by it, the most peaceable fruit of justice."

CHAPTER LXIX

THAT NO ONE PRESUME TO DEFEND ANOTHER IN THE MONASTERY

Text.

Summopere præcavendum est, ne quavis occasione præsumat alter alterum defendere monachum in monasterio, aut quasi tueri, etiamsi qualibet consanguinitatis propinquitate jungantur. Nec quolibet modo id a monachis præsumatur, quia exinde gravissima occasio scandalorum oriri potest. Quod si quis hæc transgressus fuerit, acrius coerceatur.

Care must be taken that on no occasion one monk presume to defend another in the monastery, or to take his part, even although they be connected by some near tie of kinship. Let not the monks dare to do this in any way whatsoever; because therefrom may arise the most grievous occasion of scandals. If anyone transgress this Rule, let him be very severely punished.

Thoughts.

THIS chapter seems to have been added to complete what St. Benedict laid down concerning the punishment of faults (Chapters XXIII. and XXX.).

St. Benedict, generally so gentle, speaks quite hotly here: "Let no monk *presume*"; "let not the monks *dare*"; "a most grievous occasion of scandals"; "transgressors are to be *very severely* punished."

To defend another, even though a near relation, whom the Abbot has corrected, would destroy the

authority of the Superior, and would be harmful to the subject. Such conduct would upset all obedience; it would prevent the punishment from having good effect, and would implant a rankling sense of injury and soreness. St. Benedict makes it quite clear that there must be no interference by an unauthorized third person between the Superior and the subject whom he has thought necessary to correct.

CHAPTER LXX

THAT NO ONE PRESUME TO STRIKE OR EXCOMMUNICATE ANOTHER

Text.

Ut vitetur in monasterio omnis præsumptionis occasio, ordinamus atque constituimus, ut nulli liceat quemquam fratrum suorum excommunicare aut cædere, nisi cui potestas ab Abbate data fuerit. Peccantes autem coram omnibus arguantur, ut cæteri metum habeant. Infantibus vero usque ad quintum decimum annum ætatis, disciplinæ diligentia ab omnibus et custodia sit; sed et hoc cum omni mensura et ratione. Nam in fortiori ætate qui præsumpserit aliquatenus sine præcepto Abbatis, vel in ipsis infantibus sine discretione exarserit, disciplinæ regulari subjaceat, quia scriptum est: "*Quod tibi non vis fieri, alii ne feceris.*"

Let every occasion of presumption be banished from the monastery. We ordain, therefore, that no one be allowed to excommunicate or strike any of his brethren, unless authority to do so shall have been given him by the Abbot. Let such as offend herein be rebuked in the presence of all, that the rest may be struck with fear. With regard to the children, however, let them be kept by all under diligent and watchful discipline, until their fifteenth year; yet this, too, with measure and discretion. For if anyone presume, without permission of the Abbot, to chastise such as are above that age, or show undue severity even to the children, he shall be subjected to the discipline of the Rule, because it is written: "What thou wouldst not have done to thyself, do not thou to another."

presumption and a form of pric

The training of boys down very severe. The rod was in "Life of St. Anselm," by M. R They were "kept by all under discipline." The principle, " done by," if remembered, will and charitable, whilst firm, ir young.

CHAPTER LXXI

THAT THE BRETHREN BE OBEDIENT ONE TO THE OTHER

Text.

Obedientiæ bonum non solum Abbati exhibendum est ab omnibus, sed etiam sibi invicem ita obediant fratres, scientes se per hanc obedientiæ viam ituros ad Deum. Præmisso ergo Abbatis, aut Præpositorum qui ab eo constituuntur imperio (cui non permittimus privata imperia præponi), de cætero omnes juniores Prioribus suis omni caritate et sollicitudine obediant. Quod si quis contentiosus reperitur, corripiatur.

Si quis autem Frater pro quavis minima causa, ab Abbate vel a quocumque Priore suo corripiatur quolibet modo; vel si leviter senserit animum Prioris cujuscumque contra se iratum, vel commotum, quamvis modice, mox sine mora tamdiu prostratus in terra ante pedes ejus jaceat satisfaciens, usque dum benedictione sanetur illa commotio. Quod si quis contempserit facere aut corporali vindictæ subjaceat, aut si contumax fuerit, de monasterio expellatur.

Not only is the excellence of obedience to be shown by all to the Abbot, but the brethren must also obey one another, knowing that by this path of obedience they shall come unto God. The commands, then, of the Abbot or the Superiors appointed by him (to which we allow no private orders to be preferred) having the first place, let all the younger brethren obey their elders with all charity and vigilance; and should anyone be found refractory, let him be corrected.

But if a brother be rebuked by the Abbot, or any of his Superiors, for the slightest cause, or if he perceive that the mind of any Superior is even slightly angered or moved against him, however little, let him at once, without delay, cast himself on the ground at his feet, and there remain doing penance until that feeling be appeased, and he giveth him the blessing. If anyone should disdain to do this, let him either be subjected to corporal chastisement, or, if he remain obdurate, let him be expelled from the monastery.

understand it. Obedience
so we must not be content
but must *seek* occasions for

It is not that each one
orders on others, but that
of self-subjection and holy
do the pleasure of his bre
wishes, submit his judgme
with any trials from them
which we shall go to God."
religious life is to attain to
and to the perfect denial of
of interior obedience leads
will to the will of God.

How anxious we should b

We must be submissive,
and his officials, "with all c

How quickly and readily
selves for faults against this

It is not merely because t
for obedience' sake, for the s

there is no real understanding of obedience, no love for it, and therefore no true spirituality.

How necessary it is for us to be constantly impressing upon ourselves the full significance and importance of interior obedience! The spirit of the world is so opposed to it that it may be forgotten or misjudged. Yet, if we understand St. Benedict's Rule, we shall see that it is the central teaching; we shall find it insisted upon in almost every chapter. It is the alpha and the omega of our interior life as children of St. Benedict, and it must ever remain the characteristic virtue of our lives.

Prayer.

Obedientiæ bonum. How excellent is this virtue, O my Lord!

Thou didst love it; Thou didst go down to Nazareth to be subject.

Give me the spirit of the holy house.

Drive all pride and selfishness out of Thy house.

Thou didst obey Thy own creatures, O my God.

Shall I not obey those who are in Thy place, and those who live with me in Thy house?

Per hanc viam. By this path shall I come to Thee.

Thou wilt love me and help me.

If I drink of the torrent of the way, Thou wilt lift me up.

Eccles. iv. 11. "Thou shalt be as the obedient son of the Most High, and He will have mercy on thee more than a mother."

Omni caritate et sollicitudine. May I ever obey with "all charity." May I obey for love of Thee, seeing Thee and serving Thee in my brethren.

Teach me to be "vigilant," ever watchful over myself.

How easily I forget Thee, my Lord, and Thy rights!

Contentiosus. How "refractory" I often am!

Prostratus in terra. I cast myself on the ground at Thy feet.

Cum benedictione. Forgive me, dear Lord, and bless me. Chastise me when I am proud, lest Thou dost cast me away from Thee.

Teach me interior obedience to all men for Thy sake.

My soul, be ye subject to thy God!

CHAPTER LXXII

OF THE GOOD ZEAL WHICH MONKS OUGHT TO HAVE

Text.

Sicut est zelus amaritudinis malus, qui separat a Deo, et ducit ad infernum: ita est zelus bonus, qui separat a vitiis, et ducit ad Deum et ad vitam æternam. Hunc ergo zelum ferventissimo amore exerceant monachi, id est, ut honore se invicem præveniant. Infirmitates suas sive corporum sive morum patientissime tolerent: obedientiam sibi certatim impendant. Nullus quod sibi utile judicat sequatur, sed quod magis alii. Caritatem fraternitatis casto impendant amore; Deum timeant; Abbatem suum sincera et humili caritate diligant; Christo omnino nihil præponant, qui nos pariter ad vitam æternam perducat.

As there is an evil zeal of bitterness, which separateth from God, and leads to hell, so there is a good zeal, which keepeth us from vice, and leadeth to God and to life everlasting. Let monks, therefore, exert this zeal with most fervent love—that is, "in honour preferring one another." Let them most patiently endure one another's infirmities, whether of body or of mind. Let them vie with one another in obedience. Let no one follow what he thinketh good for himself, but rather what seemeth good for another. Let them cherish fraternal charity with chaste love, fear God, love their Abbot with sincere and humble affection, and prefer nothing whatever to Christ. And may He bring us all alike to life everlasting.

Thoughts.

This "good zeal" is an ardour or a healthy emulation for good amongst the brethren.

To a spirit of ardour and emulation arising from

principles are carried out, the
will be the home not only
but of perfect peace and happ
of the day is lightened and n
sympathy and love. Let us
out the injunctions of the Rt

1. "In honour preferring c

We have already in Chap
mutual respect, reverence, ar
beautiful a result of true spir

2. "Let them most patien
infirmities, whether of body c

We must be all-enduring
ye one another's burdens, a
Christ."

3. "Let them vie one with

See the last chapter.

4. "Let no one follow wha
himself, but rather what seen

We must forget ourselves
Let us be anxious that wha

completely selfish, but from a disinterested love of each one for his own sake apart from personal feeling.

6. "Let them fear God."

The love of our neighbour is like to the First Commandment, the love of God. We must fear to break so serious a commandment of God. "If a man love not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God Whom he sees not?"

7. "Let them love their Abbot with sincere and humble affection."

He is the father of the family, and the representative of God. "Sincere," then, should our love for him be, for he spends himself for us and bears heavy responsibilities; and "humble," because we remember Whose place he holds.

8. "Let him prefer nothing whatever to Christ."

Whatever we do for another is done for Christ. Remember Christ always; serve Him in everyone; love Him above every form of selfishness.

If we were filled with this holy zeal, we should find that it "keepeth us from vice, and leadeth to God and to life everlasting."

The fruits of bad zeal are:

1. Despising others.
2. Impatience with the weaknesses of others.
3. Unwillingness to obey others.
4. Wishing to have everything according to one's own views and convenience.
5. Dislike or envy of the brethren.
6. Rashness of conscience arising from the absence of holy fear.

7. Making light of Superiors, and the denial of the love, honour, and obedience due to them.

8. Filling the heart with creatures, and so driving out the love of Christ.

Prayer.

"By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John xiii. 35).

"God is charity, and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him" (1 John iv. 16).

Zelus malus. The "zeal of bitterness" will separate me from Thee.

O God of charity, save me from the spirit of unkindness.

Zelus bonus. If I abide in charity, I shall abide in Thee.

Ferventissimo amore. May I ever exert this zeal with most fervent love.

I must always "in honour prefer another."

In honouring others I honour Thee.

Patientissime tolerent. May I especially remember Thee when clothed with infirmity. This is true charity, true unselfishness.

"If you love those that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the publicans do the same?" (Matt. v. 46).

Obedientiam sibi. May I vie with others in humble submission of myself.

Certatim impendant. This is my honour, this my glory, to be the servant of all. Thy followers come to serve, and not to be ministered unto.

Non quod sibi utile sed magis alii.

My only care, dear Lord, shall be for others.

Make me forgetful of self, and thoughtful for others.

I must be all things to all men for Thy sake.

Casto amore.

A selfish love is not a love of everyone. It is a love of individuals for sensual satisfaction.

Purify my affections, O Lord. Save me from this danger.

"They who separate themselves: sensual men, having not the Spirit" (Jude i. 19).

Deum timeant.

Fill me with Thy fear. This is Thy commandment.

O my soul, fear to disobey thy God.

"The end of the commandment is charity from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an unfeigned faith" (1 Tim. i. 5).

My dear Lord, charity to others is the love of Thee.

Thou art my God and my All.

Sincera et humili caritate.

I will love Thee in my Superior with sincere and humble affection.

Christo nihil præponant.

I will prefer nothing whatever to Thee.

Jesus, my Lord and my God, fill me with love for Thee.

Enkindle the fire of charity in my heart.

Ad vitam æternam.

Bring us all alike to life everlasting. Amen.

CHAPTER LXXIII

THAT THE WHOLE OBSERVANCE OF PERFECTION IS NOT SET DOWN IN THIS RULE

Text.

Regulam autem hanc descripsimus, ut eam observantes in monasteriis aliquatenus vel honestatem morum, aut initium conversationis nos demonstremus habere. Cæterum ad perfectionem conversationis qui festinant, sunt doctrinæ sanctorum patrum, quarum observatio perducit hominem ad celsitudinem perfectionis. Quæ enim pagina, aut quis sermo divinæ auctoritatis Veteris ac Novi Testamenti, non est rectissima norma vitæ humanæ? Aut quis liber sanctorum catholicorum Patrum hoc non resonat, ut recto cursu perveniamus ad Creatorem nostrum?

Nec non et Collationes Patrum, et Instituta et Vita eorum; sed et Regula sancti Patris nostri Basilii, quid aliud sunt, nisi bene viventium et obedientium monachorum instrumenta virtutum? Nobis autem desidiosis et male viventibus atque negligentibus, rubor confusionis est.

We have written this Rule in order that, by observing it in monasteries, we may show ourselves to have some degree of goodness of life, and a beginning of holiness. But for him who would hasten to the perfection of religion there are the teachings of the holy Fathers, the following whereof bringeth a man to the height of perfection. For what page or what word is there in the divinely inspired books of the Old and New Testaments that is not a most unerring rule for human life? Or what book of the holy Catholic Fathers doth not loudly proclaim how we may by a straight course reach our Creator?

Moreover, the *Conferences of the Fathers*, their *Institutes* and their *Lives*, and the Rule of our holy Father Basil—what are these but the instruments whereby well-living and obedient monks attain to virtue? But to us, who are slothful and negligent and of evil lives, they are cause for shame and confusion.

Quisquis ergo ad patriam cœlestem festinas, hanc minimam inchoationis Regulam descriptam, adjuvante Christo, perfice: et tunc demum ad majora, quæ supra commemoravimus, doctrinæ virtutumque culmina, Deo protegente, pervenies.

Whoever, therefore, thou art that hasteneth to thy heavenly country, fulfil by the help of Christ this least of Rules which we have written for beginners, and then at length thou shalt arrive, under God's protection, at the lofty summits of doctrine and virtue of which we have spoken above.

Thoughts.

THE special feature of St. Benedict's Rule was that, by its discretion on the one hand, and by its firmness on the other, it opened wider the doors of the monastic life, whilst it closed them at the same time against laxity and low views. It emphasized the need of interior humility and obedience, and was much less rigid in regard to bodily austerities. Many have become Saints under its gentle and discreet guidance, who, under the Eastern Rules, would have lost courage and missed their aim.

St. Benedict is very humble about his Rule. It is a less austere life than that he loved to read of in the pages of Cassian, but he is persuaded it will suit the average man better. If God calls a particular soul to greater strictness of life, he can always study the teaching of the Holy Fathers, the pages of Sacred Scripture, the works of Cassian, and the Rule of St. Basil. In these works "the strong have still something to strive after," whilst in his own Rule "the weak will find nothing from which they need flee away."

With what beautiful humility St. Benedict finishes his Rule! Though he led such a wonderful life of austerity and prayer, he classes himself with his

children as one of the beginners, as a monk who is "slothful and negligent." He, however, assures us for our encouragement that, if we keep this Rule of his, we shall arrive at the summit of perfection. The Rule is, therefore, a certain way to perfection and Heaven. It is a sure path for us to walk in, and has been trodden by countless holy men through the centuries. Let us, then, ever love it as our precious inheritance, let us study to acquire its spirit, and let us form our lives according to its maxims. May it ever be in our hands and hearts during our lives; may it rest in the tomb with us; may it be our consolation at the judgment, and our title-deed to the kingdom of heaven.

Prayer.

Ut eam observantes. Help me, O my God, to observe this holy Rule.

Initium conversationis. May I show at length some degree of goodness, and a beginning of holiness.

Desidiosis, etc. Alas! I am slothful, negligent, and of evil life.

Ad patriam cœlestem. May I at length hasten to the heavenly country.

Minimam Regulam adjuvante Christo. Help me, O Christ, to keep this "little" Rule, which is so hard for me.

I am a beginner: guide my steps, support my weakness.

Doctrinæ virtutumque culmina. Fill me with a holy longing for the lofty summits of doctrine and virtue.

Give me a deep love for the Holy Rule, and a clear understanding of its teaching.

May I ever think of it, pray upon it, and practise it.

It contains Thy words to my soul, O my God: "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt tell them to thy children, and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house and walking upon thy journey, sleeping and rising. And thou shalt bind them as a sign on thy hand, and they shall be and shall move between thy eyes, and thou shalt write them in the entry and on the doors of thy house" (Deut. vi. 6, 9).

O holy Father St. Benedict, by thy exemplary life and most precious death, bless me in the path of thy Holy Rule, that I may arrive at the country of eternal glory in Heaven. Amen.

"We wish this Rule to be frequently read in the community, that none of the brethren may excuse himself on the plea of ignorance" (Chap. LXVI.).

CENTRAL ... I.O.G.D.

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